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HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS.



HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS:

BEING

*OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY OF SOME OF
THE LESS KNOWN STATES OF EUROPE.*

BY

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“Bornons ici cette carrière;
Les longs ouvrages me font peur.”
La Fontaine.

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N O T E.



THERE is no attempt at originality in these Abstracts. They are mere compilations of facts, which had their origin, and it is hoped may have their usefulness and their excuse, in the general absence of histories upon their subjects.

Anon

Amor

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I.

DENMARK, SWEDEN, AND NORWAY.

DENMARK, SWEDEN, AND NORWAY.

THE early history of the Scandinavian people is that of scattered and contending tribes, among whom the stronger gradually absorb the weaker and thus extend both their dominions and their name. The Danes, the Swedes, and the Norwegians are found alike inhabiting the most northern of the two peninsulas; the tendency of migration however was southward; the Danes went forth from Scania, the first cradle of their race, upon the northern shore of the Sound, they over-ran the neighbouring isles and also Jutland, they carried their settlements into Sleswig as far as the banks of the Eider. The Swedes descended from beyond the Lake Malar, they united by conquest or by compact with the Goths, and in time the King of Upsala exchanged his title for that of King of the two people. And if the Norwegians proved more stationary it was because they were shut in by natural barriers and by neighbours whose strength was from the first superior to their own.

Until the ninth century it is the history of tribes and not of nations. There is no coherence of races or of conquests; there are no limits permanently

A.D.

A.D. achieved that resemble those of later times. The
 — names of Ivar Vidfadme and of his grandson Harold
 735 + Hildetand enjoy a semi-legendary fame. They are
 said successively to have conquered and ruled over the
 Jutes and Goths, over the southern and eastern shores
 of the Baltic as far even as Carelia, over Northumber-
 land upon the further side of the North Sea. The
 793 fame of Ragnar Lodbrog is said to have equalled
 + that of his predecessors. But these were merely
 the successful chieftains of a savage people in a
 savage age, and though the restless valour of their
 followers might for a time achieve these conquests
 there was no power to retain them. The age of
 Charlemagne still found the Scandinavians mere
 heathen hordes. They were to be conquered and
 thrust back beyond the Eider; but though their
 resistance proves that they had already become
 formidable, they had not yet risen to the dignity of
 being treated with.

From this time however there is progress to be
 traced. The contact with the Empire was stimulating
 it. Along the Eider there had been founded German
 towns and fortresses which were not merely the
 instruments of war but of civilization. Hamburg was
 rising to importance. An intercourse began between
 the petty princes of Denmark and the successors of
 Charlemagne. Christianity soon followed. A prince
 826 of Jutland was baptized in 826 at the court of Louis
 the Debonair. Within three years St. Anschar, a
 829 monk of Corby, arrived in Denmark, and passing on
 to Sweden obtained the fame of having been the first
 apostle to the North. More important politically was

the consolidation of power which now began. The close of the ninth century beheld the kingdoms assuming somewhat of their modern shape. Under the long reign of Gorm in Denmark, under that of Harold Harfager in Norway, the petty princedoms were drawn together. Sweden soon emulated the example: the divided monarchies of Swedes and Goths were united under Eric Edmundson.

The Scandinavian kingdoms were thus constituted. They were still however remote and barbarous, and they did not attract the attention of Europe. But their inhabitants had already begun to win abroad the fame which was denied to them at home. Their soil too sterile to support them, their ocean so present everywhere as though to tempt them, had been inciting causes of migration. The internal struggles of tribe with tribe, their exclusion from the continent by the arms of Charlemagne, the conquests of Gorm and Harold within their own peninsula, and the necessity of refuge or the pursuit of independence for the vanquished, had added further motives. There now poured forth successive expeditions which carried the fame of the Northmen to the remotest lands. Every sea was made a high road, every river a path, in their career of conquest. From the shores of Greenland to those of Attica their name was spread, and the thrones of England; and of Normandy, of Naples, and of Russia, became the splendid prizes of their arms.

To the Danes and to the Norwegians more especially 800-1000 belong the glories of these exploits. To the latter belongs also the fame of having been discoverers as well

A.D. as conquerors. From the nearer shores of Scotland
— and of Ireland the Norwegians passed onward to the
scattered islands that stud the higher latitudes. The
861-982 discovery of Iceland and of Greenland was followed by
1061 that of America, and four centuries before the birth of
Columbus Norwegian colonists had given to his con-
tinent the name of Vineland. The Swedes, shut out
from the high seas, and sailing only on an inland lake,
have fewer exploits to record. They gave however its
first dynasty and perhaps its name to an empire that
now stretches from their own frontier to the Pacific
Ocean.

The Northmen of this age have had their parallel in
the Greeks of modern time. They prospered every-
where more abundantly than at home. While mighty
thrones were being raised by the hands of mere ad-
venturers the parent kingdoms remained still undevel-
oped and incomplete. It is with the obscure, however,
rather than with the great, that we are compelled to
deal. The conquests of the Northmen were the
conquests of individuals for themselves, and in no sense
for the countries which they had abandoned: their
history therefore forms but little part of that of the
Scandinavian kingdoms.

Four centuries have still to pass before the history
of these kingdoms rises to sustained importance,
and during this period a brief sketch of each must
suffice.

DENMARK, the most exposed for good as well as
for evil to foreign influence, was the earliest in her
development. She now consisted of Scania, Jutland,

Sleswig, and the Islands. The Dannewirk, a rampart of defence erected against Charlemagne, was also a boundary that stretched from the northern bank of the Eider across the peninsula and divided her from Holstein and the Empire on the south. The descendants of Gorm retained his crown ; their hereditary succession however had still to be confirmed by popular assent, and the monarchy might be considered an elective one. The annals of the time do not encourage us to believe that their reigns were tranquil ones. The nation, still pagan in its belief, still barbarous in its instincts, was still unsettled. It was exposed to the crusading sword of Henry the Fowler and of the earlier Ottos, and it could not at once abandon its 934-975 adventurous habits and become content with the defence and consolidation of its power at home. It still pursued the dream of conquest beyond the seas, and while the Kings of Norway, France, and England were being despoiled of their provinces and of their crowns, the Germans were suffered to invade Sleswig and to establish garrisons and colonies which were to prepare the way for the permanent absorption of the province by their own nation.

A Northern Empire indeed for a time seemed possible 1018 when Canute the Great arose. King by inheritance of England and of Denmark, he was able by successful war to add almost the whole of Norway to his dominions. The definite incorporation of Sleswig under treaty with the Emperor Conrad, and the submission of the Wendish tribes, appeared to open for him a way on to the continent. His own ambition, and a wisdom rare in his age and in his nation, gave

A.D. colour to the prospect of increasing power. The fusion of the different races over which he ruled, their civilization by religion and by law, were being aimed at; and, had men with like capacity succeeded to his throne, the world might have beheld an Empire of the North as well as of the East and West. But the

1036 kingdoms of the great Danish monarch fell asunder on his death, and his successors sink again into insignificance. Another century passes before a bright page illumines their obscure annals. The names of

1157-1182 Waldemar the Great, of Canute VI. and Waldemar the

1182-1202 Victorious his sons, are then found attracting the

1202-1241 attention of Europe. Again their kingdom seemed about to raise itself to be a continental power. They sallied forth from their peninsula, they again conquered the Wends; the southern shores of the Baltic, even as far as Courland and Esthonia, were made to tremble at the Danish arms. The German Empire, too weak, through the contests of which it had become the scene, to interfere, was unable to prevent the growth of a power whose vast aggrandisement it now began to dread. But the greatness was again but temporary. Waldemar the Victorious, surprised and made a prisoner in Germany, beheld his empire returning to its fragments. Regaining his liberty he tried to regain his power, but a disastrous battle

1227 at Bornhoved in 1227 gave a death-blow to his ambition. An alliance of the petty princes who feared his greatness prevailed against him, and Denmark relapsed again into decline.

Many causes now contributed to the downfall of the kingdom. By the fatal policy of Waldemar it was

divided among his sons, and the separation from the crown of Sleswig more particularly prepared the way for a long series of dissensions and for permanent misfortune. The sovereigns who in succession occupied the throne were weak and incapable, and the murder of two within ten years is at least a proof of the disorders of the country. The feudal tenures introduced from Germany had given a fatal encouragement to the ambition of prelates and of nobles. The Archbishops of Lund, a see which had been founded in 1103, with jurisdiction over all the Scandinavian North, aspired to be the rivals of the crown. The nobles, adding daily to their power, were able to extort from Christopher II. on his accession a 1319 capitulation, which is remarkable as the first instance of its kind, and which virtually transformed the monarchy into an aristocracy. While anarchy increased within the country, new enemies arose around it. The Norwegians in a war that lasted for long years harassed it. The necessities of Christopher obliged him to pledge Scania, Halland, and Bleking to Sweden. A formidable foe too was now appearing in the Hanseatic League, whose rise had followed upon the fall of Waldemar's power. The rich cities of Lubeck and Hamburg had seized the opportunity to assert their freedom. Their citizens are said to have been sharers in the triumph of Bornhoved. They gradually gathered round themselves confederates and allies, until their league extended to the Rhine and to the Vistula; and, ever watchful to profit by the misfortunes of others, they mingled in the contests of their Scandinavian neighbours, and by adding to their

A.D. troubles increased for themselves the opportunities of power. Harassed by foreign enemies and by strife with his own nobles, Christopher at last was driven from his kingdom. A count of Holstein, known as
 1325-40 the Black Geert, became for fourteen years the virtual sovereign, and imposed upon the country his nephew, Waldemar III., the heir of the rebellious house of Sleswig, as a titular King. Dismembered and in anarchy the country had sunk low, and it was not until the assassination of Black Geert, in
 1340 1340, that any hope appeared of its recovery.

800-900 SWEDEN, remote in situation, and less exposed to foreign influences either for good or evil, had been more slow than Denmark in her development. She had escaped however the vicissitudes of her sister kingdom, and had more steadily extended her power. The ninth century, an epoch in the history of her neighbours, was an epoch also in her own. What Gorm was accomplishing in Denmark was being
 890 accomplished in Sweden under Eric Edmundson. The country was made one, and Goths and Swedes alike acknowledged the same monarch. Already the Aland islands had been made the stepping-stones across the Baltic; there were Swedish colonies in Finland; and the first germs of the ambition and the conquests of later ages were becoming apparent. These beginnings however were slow in receiving their development. The union which Eric had
 993-1022 accomplished was at best but an imperfect one; and it was not until the reign of Olaf Skotkonung, a sovereign memorable as having been the first Christian

king, that it was fully assured, and that the old style of King of Upsala was exchanged for the ampler title of King of Sweden. The process of annexation in Finland was slow also. There was a continuous stream of trade through Russia to the south, but it was not until the days of St. Eric, who reigned from 1155 to 1160, that the real and permanent foundations 1155-60 that were to unite the eastern to the western shores of the Baltic were laid. In this reign the spread of Christianity became the spread of power. Eric, who earned his title from his definite establishment of the new faith, sent missionaries, chiefly English, across the Baltic. These missionaries became the pioneers of conquest; and, in an age when the Russian princes were trembling before the Tartars, and when no neighbouring states had yet arisen whose jealousy could be aroused, the extension of Swedish power remained unchallenged.

Charles, the successor of St. Eric, obtained the 1160-67 erection of Upsala into an independent archbishopric, 1162 and thus freed his country from its ecclesiastical dependence upon the Danish see of Lund; but the remaining sovereigns of his line can hardly be said to have contributed much towards the advancement of their country, and it was reserved for a new dynasty to carry on the work of the earlier kings. A powerful family had risen near the throne, and, retaining the old tribal rank of Jarls, had filled almost the position of mayors of the palace. The death of Eric Ericson without children removed the 1250 last obstacle to their ambition. The infant son of Birger Jarl was elected to the vacant throne, and the

A.D. — transfer of the royal title to the family that had long held royal power seemed as natural to the Swedes as it had done earlier to the Franks. As regent for his child, Birger upheld and added to the greatness of his country ; he became the conspicuous figure of the 13th century in the North ; he is the founder of Stockholm, the conqueror of the Finns, the protector of the exiled princes of Russia, the mediator in differences between Norway and Denmark. His sceptred descendants however did not equal their unsceptred sire. The conquest of Finland was indeed completed by Torkel Knutson at the close of the 13th century, and shed some lustre upon the reign of King Birger, but the quarrels of succeeding princes among themselves disgraced and distracted the country. The miseries of civil war were followed by an unfortunate expedition and defeat in Russia. The plague which ravaged Europe towards the middle of the 14th century was felt in its full fury in Sweden, and in the midst of calamities for which they were largely held accountable the last princes of the House of the Folkungas were banished and their dynasty ended.

NORWAY, not destined to the independence of her sister kingdoms, has less of history even while she was still her own. Without extent and without resources, hemmed in between more powerful neighbours and the sea, it was impossible that she should achieve a permanent greatness. There is a brilliance however and an interest in her early annals from the almost exclusive share which she bore in the colonization of the North Seas. Scotland and Ireland, Iceland and

the lesser isles, Greenland and America, were all
peopled by her settlers. The settlements were not
indeed connected by any ties of close allegiance to the
parent country, and they were often, as in the case of
Iceland, completely independent; but they were united
by the bonds of a common language and a common
origin, by friendship and by the habits of mutual
assistance. While they endured they formed a
federation, which, however lax it may have been,
extended the fame and extended also the fields for the
valour and for the enterprize of the Norwegian race.
One by one however they slipped away. America
through the inclemencies of nature and disease was
abandoned and forgotten. Greenland, too distant and
inhospitable to be attractive, was neglected. The
Scotch and Irish settlements were absorbed beneath
the growing strength of the native sovereigns. A
King of Norway, Hako IV., was defeated at Largs by 1261
a King of Scotland in 1261, and the loss of the
Hebrides and the fall of his countrymen's dominion
followed. The continued possession of the northern
islands, and the permanent annexation of Iceland 1261
could not counterbalance these disasters. The fame
of Norway declined; and, with the loss of many of
their inducements, the spirit and the strength of the
people began to languish.

The brightest period of Norwegian history was
thus closed. Her domestic annals have no importance
to arrest attention. The conquests of Harold Harfager
had secured the crown to a long line of his descendants;
but the strife of these descendants among themselves,
and the contests which were provoked by the

A.D.

A.D. — attempts of successive sovereigns, with imprudent zeal, to enforce the doctrines of Christianity upon unwilling subjects, distracted and weakened the kingdom. A prey to anarchy, it fell also a prey to its neighbours. In the 10th century it belonged for a time to Denmark; Sweden joined later in 1018-36 dismembering it; and Canute the Great was able to call himself its King. These were times indeed in which conquests and annexations were often more rapid than lasting, and a King of Norway soon reigned in his turn over Denmark. Yet there is no doubt that the Norwegians suffered more than they inflicted, and were from the first the weakest of the three nations.

1000-1100 Nor did advancing time materially increase their strength. The cities of Trondhjem and Bergen grew up during the 11th century, but the first became the seat of prelates, who, after emancipating themselves from the supremacy of Lund in 1154, aspired to shake off also the supremacy of their own sovereign; while the second soon fell into the hands of foreigners, of members of the growing Hanseatic League, who monopolised the trade and carried off the profits that should have remained to enrich the country. The nobles, becoming feudal lords, increased their power, but it was at the expense of order; and the humbler and most numerous class of peasants lost all their independence beneath the growing power of many masters. Wars, foreign and domestic, that have now no interest, exhausted the country; the plague of 1348 deprived it of at least one half of its population. Its decline had been marked, upon the extinction of its

royal dynasty in 1319, by the election of Swedish princes to fill its throne ; and after the reign of two stranger Kings it sank for ever from the list of independent kingdoms. A.D. 1319
1355

Drifting through anarchy and discord the three kingdoms had sunk low. Denmark was first to raise herself from the abasement, and the reign of a fourth Waldemar not only restored her strength but gave her a pre-eminence which she retained until the days of Gustavus Adolphus. The new sovereign, a younger son of Christopher II., was raised to the throne in 1340, and no competitor, now that Black Geert was dead, appeared to dispute it with him. Waldemar IV. had learnt wisdom in adversity ; he had imbibed, during an exile spent at the Imperial court, sound principles of war and policy ; he had recognized the immediate necessities of his country ; and, undazzled by vain dreams of empire past or future, he set himself merely to achieve the practicable. Surrendering the distant and unprofitable possessions in Esthonia, and abandoning with more reluctance his claims to the possession of Scania, Halland, and Bleking, he relieved himself from a burden of continuous war, and, through the sums of money which he received in exchange, was able to buy back possessions in Jutland and the Isles, whose situation made them more important to him than remoter provinces. Gradually consolidating his power he attempted more. The weakness of the Swedish King enabled him to recover the three Danish provinces. The isle of Gothland, and Wisby its rich capital, the centre of the Hanseatic trade within the Baltic, were plundered and annexed,

A.D. giving the title thenceforward of King of the Goths
 ——— to the Danish monarchs. This success indeed was
 paid for by the bitter enmity of the Hansa, and by a
 war in which the pride of Denmark was humbled to
 the dust beneath the power of the combined cities.

1362 Copenhagen was pillaged; and peace was only made
 1363 by a treaty which confirmed all former privileges to
 the conquerors, which gave them for fifteen years
 possession of the better part of Scania and its
 revenues, and which humbly promised that the
 election of all sovereigns of Denmark should thence-
 forth be submitted for their approval. Yet Waldemar
 has left behind him the reputation of a prudent and
 successful prince, and his policy prepared the way for
 the greatness of his successors.

At his death in 1375 two daughters, on behalf of
 their children, became claimants for his throne. The
 youngest, Margaret, had married Hako, King of Nor-
 way, the son of a deposed King of Sweden; and the
 attractive prospect of a union between the two king-
 doms, supported by her own prudent and conciliatory
 1375 measures, secured the election of her son Olaf. As
 regent for her child, who soon by the death of his
 father became King of Norway as well as of Denmark,
 she showed the wisdom of a ruler, and won the affec-
 tion of her subjects; and when the death of Olaf
 1378 himself occurred in 1387 she was rewarded in both
 kingdoms by the formal possession of the sceptres
 which she had already shown herself well able to
 hold.

Mistress in Denmark and in Norway, she prepared
 to add Sweden to her dominions. Since the

banishment of the Folkungas, Albert Duke of Mecklenburg had reigned as King. But Margaret was the widow of one who had not only been King of Norway, but had also been the son of the last banished King of Sweden; and, assuming the title of Queen, she prepared to make good her husband's claims. Albert, a foreigner, and already unpopular, was without the support which could ensure his triumph; he was defeated and made prisoner in 1389; and his fall was followed by an offer on the part of the Swedish Diet to Margaret of their crown.

She was now verging upon the completion of the design which was to perpetuate her fame. Disarming everywhere her enemies by prudence and by conciliation, she gave a peace and a security to her empire that increased her popularity and strengthened her power. Her nephew, Eric, long since accepted in Denmark and in Norway as her successor, and titularly King, was now at a solemn meeting of the states at Calmar crowned Sovereign of the Three Kingdoms. At a later meeting the Union, since known as that of Calmar, was formally voted, and the great work of her life was achieved.

It had been reserved for a woman to accomplish what none before her had achieved. The Union which had been formed was due to the personal influence and character of Margaret as much as to the accidental circumstances of inheritance and succession which had favoured her design. The daughter of Waldemar of Denmark, she had carried with her the respect that had been due to her father and to her nation. She was herself one of those women who

A.D. — ought to have been men, with masculine character and judgment, clear insight into men and things, and with a steady purpose and power of bending all to her own ends. Her great qualities ensured for her success, and have earned for her the title of the Semiramis of the North.

It is said that at the Diet not a voice was raised against the proposals that were made by the great Queen. There might be doubts indeed how jealousies were to be overcome, how differences should be reconciled; but all were willing to aid in the accomplishment of what was now the general wish. The Danes looked forward to power, the Swedes and the Norwegians to independence, from the Union. All parties viewed it as a source of strength. Out of three weak kingdoms one strong one would arise. Nor did there seem to be anything that was strange or unfamiliar in the prospect of such a confederation. There was the example of Germany under its elective chief, and it may well be imagined that the traditions of Canute and his empire were now pondered in the public mind.

But the Union when accomplished was after all but a personal one. It was a federation of States under a common head, not a fusion of three people into one nation. It had the weakness that was inseparable from such a state of things. Not one of the three kingdoms would abate one tittle of their independence, or suffer the smallest diminution of their privileges. They had given their destinies into the hands of Margaret, but they had not given them into the hands of each other; and all their rights and

their peculiarities, however irreconcilable with those of their neighbours, were at any cost to be maintained. There was the weakness also of the sovereignty being an elective one. The crown was settled upon the family of Eric of Pomerania, but except in the case of the king dying with an only son, election was to determine which member of the family should possess it; and there could not but arise cases in which the jealousies of the three nations and their divergent interests might prompt them to refuse concurrence in any nomination. While Margaret lived, her wisdom over-ruled or reconciled all differences; and it is from her having been the one sovereign who proved equal to this task, that she has obtained a just and lasting title to her fame. But even during her life there were clouds upon the horizon, and these broke forth into a storm under the reign of her successor.

The period of the Union is considered to extend 1397-1523 over one hundred and twenty-six years. Five kings in succession claimed and wore the triple crown; but from the death of Margaret, in 1412, all strength and 1412 all cohesion was lost. Her work in fact died with her. She was succeeded by a nephew who dissipated the resources and abased the dignity of the crown. Under his successors insurrection followed upon insurrection; and long before the final stroke was given, by the election of Gustavus Vasa in 1523 to be King of Sweden, the Union had been practically if not in name dissolved.

Denmark, the first of the three kingdoms in strength and civilization, had naturally obtained the larger share of power. Danes had been sent to govern

A.D. their more backward neighbours, and discontent and jealousy had arisen. Already the rule of foreigners had begun to remind the weaker kingdoms of conquest rather than of compact, and the character of Eric and the misfortunes of his reign increased the general dissatisfaction. Eric was selfish and inconsiderate. He became involved in wars with Holstein and the Hanse Towns which exhausted his empire and added to its burdens. The Swedes, under the lead of Engelbrekt, a peasant, revolted against their masters and oppressors. Their rising was put down; but another under Charles Cnutson, a new leader, succeeded to it. The Norwegians at the same time began to murmur; and even the Danes themselves, resenting at length the frivolousness and incapacity of their King, rose up against him. The nephew of the great Margaret was deposed, and ended his life a pirate upon the shores which he had ruled. His own nephew, Christopher III., succeeded to his throne, and by greater wisdom and by concessions secured his authority; but his reign was only for nine years; and on his death, without children, the succession became uncertain, and a new cause appeared to have been given for a rupture of the Union.

The Danes presuming on their power, and willing to convert a dangerous enemy into a friend, invited Adolf Count of Holstein to occupy the throne. He did not accept it for himself, but procured the election of his nephew Christian Count of Oldenburg. The transaction was resented by the Swedes. They were now called on to accept a sovereign in whose election they had had no voice, a stranger who could not even speak

their tongue. They preferred a sovereign of their own ; and they chose Charles Cnutson, who had been their leader in the reign of Eric, as King. The Norwegians followed the example ; and the solemn coronation of Charles, both at Upsala and Trondhjem, appeared to make the separation of the kingdoms complete. From this time the Union though nominally enduring for another eighty years, was practically dissolved. Charles could not indeed retain the crown which he had won ; but he was able to make Sweden the constant theatre of strife, and virtually to withdraw it from Christian's authority. His nephew Sten Sture succeeded to his influence ; and not only he, but his son and grandson after him, were often able to defy the royal power and to rule with independent authority under the title of Administrators. Norway, the weaker counterpart of Sweden, continued during these years to rebel and to suffer in sympathy with her more powerful neighbour. She could not endure however to the end. Her independence was crushed ; her great families were exterminated under the oppressions and severities of the Danish kings. And, when the opportunity came for deliverance, she had lost the strength to profit by it.

Christian of Oldenburg, the founder of a line of kings who ruled in Denmark for four hundred years, is deserving of more than a mere passing notice. He is remembered as having united the provinces of Sleswig and Holstein to the Danish Crown, the first as a lapsed fief, the second by obtaining his own election as its Count in return for declaring Sleswig inseparable from it. He is remembered also as the first German sovereign, the first who largely introduced

A.D.

A.D. the manners, the customs, and the people of Germany
to his own three kingdoms, an introduction which
modified the institutions but did not add to the
satisfaction of his Scandinavian subjects. He is
remembered even by Englishmen. He gave his
1468 daughter in marriage to James III. of Scotland, and
failing to pay her dower he pledged as a security the
Orkney and Shetland islands, which have remained
to this day unrestored. The reign of John, who
1481 succeeded to the throne in 1481, is less memorable
than that of his father. He fought against the
Swedes, the Norwegians, and the Hanse Towns, the
constant enemies of the Danish kings. He fought also
1500 against the Ditmarshers, a people whose homage he
had claimed as Duke of Holstein, and was discomfited
by their valour. But though a long period was
covered by his reign its events are not such as to have
permanently marked the history of his country; and
1513 it is not until the accession of Christian his son, the
last who had the glory of being called the sovereign
of the three kingdoms, that there is need for any
pause.

Christian II. was a man of talent and of power.
He ruled however with more energy than judgment,
and his great qualities were marred by a rash and
cruel disposition. He had married Elizabeth the
sister of the Emperor Charles V.; he had learnt
something from his connection with the greatest
sovereign of the age; he had seen the rich provinces of
Burgundy; and he had aspired to make his own
kingdoms greater than they were. Measures of the
highest practical utility were introduced; the condition

of serfs was alleviated; towns were encouraged in their growth and independence; trade and taxation were regulated; posts and inns along the high road were established; education was made compulsory. But the privileges of the clergy were at the same time restricted, and the power of the nobles was threatened. The gratitude of the lower orders was secured, but the hostility of the higher ones was excited.

While Denmark itself was disquieted, Sweden as usual was in insurrection. Christian already, as regent for his father, had completely crushed the independence of Norway; and he now prepared to deal as sternly with the sister kingdom. For a time he appeared to succeed. The last of the Administrators fell in battle; Stockholm after a long resistance submitted to him; 1520 and the Union seemed again re-established. But the character of Christian defeated all such expectations. Cruel and inconsiderate, he aimed, as he had done in Norway, at peace through extermination. Accusations against the Swedish nobles were followed by trials and by sentences that can only find their parallel in the Bloody Assizes of our own country. The Union of Calmar, as it has been said, was drowned in the Blood Bath of Stockholm. Out of the abuse of 1520 victory there sprang defeat. Gustavus Vasa, a hostage in Denmark, the son of a noble victim, had escaped to Dalecarlia. There, working upon the tempers of the 1519 rude miners of the province, he prepared to renew the attempt at freedom, now doubly dear under a tyranny. His reception at first was cold; his progress afterwards was slow. He fought a war of sieges that were prolonged. Stockholm itself was held against him for

A.D. two years. But his adversary had no longer any
— strength; his own people were rising up against him;
and, while Gustavus slowly won his way, the Danes
were so far confederate with him as to be aiming at
the expulsion of their own monarch. Christian fled
1523 before the enemies within his own kingdom; and, while
his successor was endeavouring to secure in Denmark
the crown which was falling to him, the independence
of Sweden became permanently assured.

The history of the North is thus again divided, and
of its kingdoms two resume their separate page.
Norway, however, too crushed to rise again to
independence, has fallen to be the mere province of a
neighbour; her name alone remains; her history is
merged in that of her possessors.

DENMARK, the older and more powerful kingdom,
still occupies the foremost place. Her glory indeed
had set, but a new sun had not yet risen; and for a
hundred years the remembrance of her ancient fame
retained for her some pre-eminence. These years,
however, were a period of decline. Weakened by
revolution, by the ambition of a powerful aristocracy
who aimed at building up their power at the expense
of that of the crown, by a policy that divided instead
of consolidating her provinces, and by an inability to
refrain from jealousies and wars with her rising

neighbour, she failed to maintain her strength; and before the century closed she found herself outstripped in power and compelled to yield precedence to a once subject but now rival kingdom. A.D.
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Frederick of Holstein, an uncle of Christian, had 1523 been called to the throne. He was indebted for his crown to men who had revolted against the too liberal tendencies of their late monarch, and he was compelled to purchase the continuance of their support by a capitulation which sanctioned their pretensions and restricted his own power. Concession became the necessary policy of weakness; and Gustavus Vasa, now seated on the throne of Sweden, was accepted as an equal rather than a rebel. One source of strength indeed was found: the common fear of the banished King's return united men; and this, so far from prompting them to war, disposed them the more earnestly to prudence.

The years of Frederick's reign were therefore years 1523-33 of comparative tranquillity, and their interest is derived from other incidents than those of war. The Reformation had begun in Germany; and, as early even as the reign of Christian, the disciples of Luther had 1519 penetrated into Denmark. Frederick, connected by marriage with the House of Brandenburg, and half inclined himself to the new faith, allowed, if he did not encourage, the spread of its doctrines; the nobles began to view with favour a change which might divide among them the ecclesiastical domains; and the opposition of the clergy became powerless. An edict of toleration was passed in 1527, and converts 1527 multiplied. Advantage indeed was taken of such

A.D. — dissatisfaction as prevailed to attempt a rising in favour of the late King, who himself appeared in Norway; but the attempt was checked; and Christian, deceived by the promise of a safe conduct, allowed himself to fall into the hands of Frederick, and was consigned for life to the seclusion of a prison.

1533 A deposed sovereign however is a source of inquietude; and there was war again in Christian's name upon the death of Frederick. The nobles, still jealous of the royal power, had refused to proclaim at once a successor; and the eldest son of Frederick was accorded only the imperfect title and authority of Administrator. The Hanse Towns, with their usual bitterness, became the promoters of dissension. Their power had been declining; the Danish sovereigns, even Christian himself, whose cause they now pretended to support, had favoured the Dutch towns, their young but formidable rivals; and Lubeck especially, which now beheld the neighbouring cities of Hamburg and Bremen outstripping herself, was eager to excite a contest which might restore her old pre-eminence. A war, which from its leader, a Count of Oldenburg, became known as that of the Count, followed. It was a struggle that had the character of one of people against nobles; for there were many who now preferred to forget the faults and to recall the virtues of their late sovereign; and the cause of Christian became regarded as that of the champion of popular rights, while that of his opponents seemed merely the cause of an oppressive aristocracy. The strife was bitter. Copenhagen, with the free aspirations of a trading city, pronounced in favour of her

dethroned and captive King. But the danger caused parties to unite. The prospect of a restoration of Christian II. led to a formal proclamation of Christian III.; and the new King, strong in his authority, strong in the support of Sweden, which was eagerly given to him, and profiting by dissensions, which for a time had paralysed the energies of Lubeck, became able 1537 eventually to establish his authority. A.

The clergy had dared to sympathise with, and even to support, an enemy; the triumph of the new sovereign became the death-blow to their ambition and their faith. The support of the Reformation was now required by policy; and, the convictions or the cupidity of his subjects encouraging the design, Christian became able to obtain from the States the ratification of measures, which confiscated the possessions of the church, and virtually established the new religion. Denmark, next to Switzerland, has the fame of having been the first of European Powers to decide on such a step.

But the fall of the clergy, desirable as it may have been, removed one great existing counterpoise to the power of the nobles; and the Crown, less able even than before to balance forces, became proportionately weakened. The reign of Christian III. beheld the royal authority weakened also in another manner. The accession of Frederick had once more united to it the Duchies of Sleswig and Holstein, and the retention of them might have proved some little compensation for the loss of Sweden. But Christian III. reverted to the mistaken policy of his ancestors; he divided the 1544 Duchies among his brothers; and Frederick II., his son,

A.D. — though warned by finding himself already involved in disputes with his uncles, continued the same policy. There was thus planted upon the frontiers of Denmark a group of petty and often hostile princedoms, created out of provinces which might have been annexed for ever and have been made the strength and safeguard of the kingdom.

While the country had felt its weakness it had been disposed to peace ; and strict alliances, originating chiefly in a common fear, had bound it to friendship with Sweden. As its crown however had seemed more firmly established in the reigning family, and as
1559 the death of Christian II., after a long captivity, had removed the possibility of his restoration, the old hostility between Danes and Swedes had revived, and in the reign of Frederick II. it broke out in open war.

1548 Christian III. had assumed upon his shield the three crowns that were the arms of Sweden, and had been met by stern remonstrances from Gustavus. Frederick II. saw Eric, the son and the successor of Gustavus,
1563 assuming in revenge the arms of Denmark and of Norway, and declared war. The Danish King had gained some fame by his conquest of the small but warlike republic of Ditmarsh. He had thereby terminated an independence which had endured since the days of Charlemagne, and which had been more than once successfully asserted against his own ancestors. But he could not gain the same glory in his contest with Sweden. For seven years a war
[1563-70 continued in which the successes of the Danish arms on land were almost neutralized by their reverses on the sea. The Swedes established their supremacy within

the Baltic; and the peace, which was at length concluded at Stettin in 1570, gave Denmark few advantages. She obtained indeed the recognition of her right to Norway, and to certain parts of the northern peninsula; but she was constrained to give the formal acknowledgment, which she had till now withheld, of the independence of her enemy. A.D. —

The accession of Christian IV. is the opening of a reign which has more interest than those of his predecessors. It was the protest against the long decline to which his kingdom had yielded; and though, like other protests, without eventual success, commands respect from its intentions. Chosen as a child to sit upon his father's throne, when his chief merit perhaps had been his weakness, Christian grew up into a vigorous and able sovereign. The credit of wise measures, and the fame of having for a time stood forward as a leader in the great wars of Europe, belong to him; and if his country before his death had sunk in exhaustion, and its pre-eminence had been for ever lost, the cause is rather to be sought in the vicious constitution under which it laboured, and the resistless course of the great events in which it became involved, than in any weakness or deficiency on the part of its sovereign.

Peace, which was not disturbed during the early years of the reign, saw Christian advancing to the prime of manhood. Active and eager from the first, he had employed himself in visiting the different provinces of his kingdom, and had made himself acquainted with their conditions and their wants. Norway, especially, appeared to have attracted his

A.D. sympathy. He found its inhabitants oppressed, and
its soil neglected by the foreigners who had become
its masters. The impoverishment of the country had
been too great for it again to rise to importance; but
it received the attention and the favour of its new
1624 sovereign, and the towns of Christiania, Christiansand,
and others, arose under this reign. Agriculture and
mines were now encouraged; manufactures and trade
were developed; even colonisation was thought of;
the old intercourse with Iceland and Greenland was
revived; attempts were even made to supplant the
Dutch in the distant waters of the Asiatic seas; and
1618 the rise of a Danish East Indian Company followed.

These were the occupations of over twenty years;
and, had the efforts of Christian been seconded by
those of his subjects, the kingdom might have acquired
a strength which would have enabled it to issue more
successfully from the great struggle that was to come.
But the designs of Christian were thwarted by those
of his nobles. By successive steps they had now
become the ruling power of the realm. They alone now
constituted the Diet; for the ancient order of free
peasants had long degenerated under German influence
into serfs, and since the reign of Frederick I. neither
burgesses nor clergy had been summoned. They were
masters further of the soil; Norway, as well as
Denmark, had been portioned out among them, and
small proprietors had vanished before their approach.
Whatever strengthened the royal power diminished
their own; and so they openly opposed, or tacitly
impeded all measures, however intrinsically good,
which would have reflected greatness upon the crown.

It was a struggle to govern against difficulties ; and, when troubles from without were added to the troubles from within, the hopelessness of the task became apparent, and the kingdom fell a victim to the combination of foreign and domestic enemies.

War, that became the glory and the curse of Christian's reign, did not begin till 1611. The 1611 slumbering jealousy against Sweden was then revived, and new causes were added to the old ones for hostility. Lapland, long tributary to Norway, and important through the trade along its northern coast, became the cause of quarrel. There were Swedish fisheries now claimed, there were Swedish towns arising in dangerous proximity to its shores ; the very extent of its frontier was questioned ; and the Swedish sovereign had begun to style himself its King. Charles IX. accepted the quarrel ; and dying soon after bequeathed it to his son Gustavus Adolphus. The advantage was at first upon the side of Denmark. Calmar and the isle of Oland were taken, the town giving its name thenceforward to the war. But the schemes of the new King of Sweden disposed him to wish peace in preference to a continuance of hostility. The state of Russia, now harassed by civil war and by pretenders to her throne, appeared to promise greater triumphs than could be obtained by any victories over Denmark ; and Christian was able to secure a treaty which gave him the acknowledgment of his claims in Lapland and a sum of money for the restoration of his conquests, while the long-debated right to quarter the three crowns was accorded equally to 1613 either disputant.

A.D.

Both nations were thus at liberty to turn to higher things, and to forget in their pursuit the petty jealousies of home. The Thirty Years' War began; and, Christian for his own glory, his people for their commerce and their faith, were ready to become partakers in it. Gustavus Adolphus, aspiring already to be the leader of the North, but still too busy with the affairs of Poland, was not as yet a competitor; and the natural advantages of Denmark for a continental war confirmed the balance in Christian's favour. He was himself, as Duke of Holstein, a prince of Lower Saxony; and he now came forward with his
1625 Danish troops to be the general of the allied Circle. For a time the King of Denmark stood as the champion of the Protestant princes of Germany. France and England gave him their support. But defections and jealousies at home began early to reduce his strength. Opposed to Tilly, he found himself out-mastered; and
1626 defeated in the great battle of Lutter, after having himself thrice led the charge against the enemy, he became compelled to fly to his own islands, and to abandon for a time even Jutland to the conqueror.

Yet Denmark still was formidable to the Empire. At peace with Sweden, and, in prospect of a common danger, about to unite herself more closely with that kingdom, she still might be a powerful obstacle to the establishment of Austrian power in the North. Danes and Swedes together were garrisoning the towns upon the Baltic; and Wallenstein, who was aiming, for himself or for his master, at a new sovereignty upon its shores, found quickly the necessity of dissolving this alliance. The restoration of his lost provinces

was offered to Christian, if he would abandon the alliance he had now formed; and the inducement, when added to the recollections of his German campaign, prevailed on him to sign a peace in 1629. Contrary, as it appeared, to the word which he had lately pledged, he deserted Sweden; but his act was the opening of a way for her sovereign's glory. The championship of the North was vacant; Gustavus Adolphus assumed its crown.

Before turning however to the history of Sweden, whose rise was now so entirely to eclipse her rival, it may be well to survey briefly the remainder of Christian's reign. The sixty years that it endured were not completed until 1648, when the death of the old King and the Peace of Westphalia, occurring almost simultaneously, appear to make a natural break in the history of the kingdom. Christian had viewed with anxiety the continuance of the Thirty Years' War. The triumph of either Imperialists or Swedes was alike threatening to the independence of his kingdom; and he had found himself obliged to continue in a watchful state of armed neutrality. This threatening attitude however had displeased Sweden. She was annoyed already by the raising of those dues which the Kings of Denmark had exacted from ancient date as an acknowledgment of their care, or of their sovereignty, over the Straits between the Baltic and the German Ocean; and, without a warning, the troops, that already under the command of Torstenson had struck terror throughout Germany, burst into Jutland. At the same time the provinces of Scania and Halland were invaded; and, though King Christian

A.D. bravely defended his kingdom, a single victory at sea
 —————
 1644 was all that he was able to achieve ; his forces were
 speedily exhausted, and he was compelled to purchase
 1645 peace. By the treaty of Bromsebro the important
 islands of Gothland and *Œsel*, together with some
 provinces of Norway, were now surrendered, and an
 exemption was granted to all Swedish vessels from
 the dues upon the Sound, which sensibly affected the
 revenues of the kingdom. Denmark fell almost as
 rapidly as Sweden rose. Exhausted, impoverished,
 divided, she ceased to be of account in Europe ; and
 the struggle, which in its beginnings she had aspired
 1648 to lead, was ended with hardly a thought or care as
 to what might be her wishes.

SWEDEN during the century of her old antagonist's
 decline had risen to a height that amazed Europe ;
 and it is her progress to this pitch of greatness that
 we have now to trace. Gustavus Vasa had secured
 1523 the independence, and had been rewarded with the
 crown, of his liberated country. He had found a
 people, however, whom long years of licence and of
 insurrection had made hard to govern. The nobles,
 though crushed beneath the tyranny of Christian,
 retained a jealousy of their new sovereign's power ;
 the clergy, supporters as they had been to a great
 extent of the deposed monarch, and with their
 ambition and their strength undiminished, were still
 more formidable ; and even the peasants had learned
 in their attempts at freedom to be impatient of

control. He found a country too that was exhausted and desolated. Stockholm had lost three-fourths of its inhabitants, and foreign settlers had now to be invited to restore its population and its prosperity. But the character of Gustavus enabled him to surmount his difficulties. Rebellion, which at first seemed eager to undo her work, was checked. By firmness where Gustavus felt that he was strong, by concession where he was weak, he established his power. To reflect well beforehand, and to act vigorously after, is the advice which he is said to have given to his sons; and he has the rare merit of having practised himself what he thus recommended to others.

A.D.
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There is much of the patriarchal about the 1523-60 character of the reign. Tall and majestic in his person, Gustavus might compare with the chieftains of a younger and more impressionable age. By the voice of a free people he had been raised to the throne; and the people, forgetting the nobility of his birth in the remembrance of the sufferings which he had shared, regarded him as one of themselves. His own rule displayed the mingled despotism and deference towards his subjects that had marked the earlier leaders of mankind. He magnified his power; he claimed, so long as it should be his, to govern in things small as well as great; but he remembered the origin of that power; he held it merely as a trust; and, acknowledging himself the representative of the people, would have resigned it had he forfeited their confidence.

He was the conqueror of his throne; but it is the

A.D. — glory of a statesman rather than of a soldier that has rested upon him. It was peace that his country required, to build up, to restore, and to strengthen her government; and wisdom, rather than ambition, directed the events of the next forty years. The turbulence of his own people had to be repressed; the Dalecarlians, too famous for their revolts, had repeatedly to be coerced; the hostile spirit of the clergy raised murmurs against the king, who would have curbed their power, and who sympathized with the now spreading doctrines of the Reformation; they defamed his character, they instigated revolt; if famine or if pestilence appeared it was a judgment of heaven upon their heretic sovereign. To govern under such circumstances became a difficulty, and Gustavus determined to rule or to resign.

The adoption of the principles of the Reformation had presented itself to him as a means to power. The
 1519 disciples of Luther had penetrated early into Sweden, and had found favour with the German element now scattered through the towns and with those who looked forward to the plunder of ecclesiastical property. They had preached openly in Stockholm; already the Bible had been translated; and free discussion on all points of controversy was allowed. It remained only to legalise the bent of the national inclination; and by sanctioning the new faith to aim a blow at a hierarchy whose politics were dangerous and whose preachings had become distasteful.

1527 A Diet at Westeras was assembled in 1527. The representatives of nobles, clergy, miners, burgesses, and peasants, were present. The King, by the mouth

of his chancellor, recalled the origin of his reign ; he showed. that he had undertaken no easy task ; that the insurrections among his people, and the hostility of his clergy, were paralysing his efforts ; and he demanded to be relieved from his functions, and prayed the assembly to grant him some domain to which he might retire as a private citizen. His words were weighty in their effect. It was seen that the sacrifice of the clergy was demanded, and the assembly hesitated in its reply. “The devil in hell” exclaimed Gustavus, as he recounted what he had gone through, “would not rule over you at this rate ;” and his determination carried the day. Men felt that they could not lose their King. The burgesses and peasants were proud of him ; they saw in him their own creation, and a King, who, as his rule had shown, was no respecter of persons. The nobles beheld a prospect of increasing their own power, and yielded before the urgency of the humbler orders. Gustavus triumphed. Decrees were passed which gave him full authority to repress revolt, to dispose of convents and ecclesiastical strongholds, and to sanction the preaching of the Reformed religion. His power henceforth was established. If the nobles had ceased to be formidable, the clergy now became insignificant. Their lands, their privileges, were taken from them. The power of the crown and the power of the people were alike increased ; and the humbler orders, uniting by community of interest with their King, became more strenuously than ever his supporters. Not many years elapsed, and the crown, which Gustavus had received as an elective one, was made hereditary in his family. 1540

A.D.

He had now a new interest in the upholding of its power; and he set himself with a redoubled energy to the investigation of all its rights and revenues. He aimed at knowing and directing everything. Lands, and mines, and fisheries, were brought under his control. Acquisitiveness appeared to be developing into a passion; and the minuteness of his enquiries has even exposed him to the charge of meanness and avarice. Yet he was known on occasions when his country required it to sacrifice the whole of his accumulations; and it is more probable that it was a natural activity of mind, and not a grasping spirit, that led him to descend into the details which have exposed him to criticism.

The general character of the reign continued peaceful: it was a time of development. There was
1534 war however with Lubeck; and Swedes and Danes united to defeat a common enemy. There was war again still later in Finland: its frontiers were disputed
1554-57 by the Russians; and successive raids, too ominous of the campaigns to come, desolated the country. But with these exceptions there was peace. Gustavus required strength; and though the seeds of strife might be springing round him he preferred to leave the task of dealing with them to his successors. The Kings of Denmark, assuming in their arms the three
1548 crowns that belonged to Sweden, provoked reiterated protests. Strong teeth, however, as Gustavus himself declared, would have been necessary to tear them from the scutcheon; and they remained to be the fertile origin of wars for future generations. The fast approaching dissolution of the Order of the Cross and

Sword, and the evident desire of Denmark to appropriate its possessions, became at the close of the reign another cause inviting strife. But again Gustavus hesitated; and it was reserved for his descendants to make Europe ring with the story of their struggles upon the Livonian plains.

Without great triumphs, but with steady growth, the nation advanced; and Gustavus, as the infirmities of age increased upon him, began to feel his work was done. Wearied of government, wearied of contemplating the impatience of his children, who seemed too eager to assume his power, he determined upon abdication. The Emperor Charles V. in 1556 had resigned his kingdoms to his son; and four years later Gustavus followed the example. On the 25th of June, 1560, a scene was enacted at Stockholm which 1560 was parallel in every way to that at Brussels. Gustavus with his four sons appeared before the States. He recalled the origin and the events of his reign; and claimed from his people their assent to his abdication, which he was about to pronounce in favour of his eldest son. By three months only was he thus anticipating his death; for on the 29th of September the great founder of the House of Vasa was no more.

A period follows of fifty years, dividing the reign of 1560-1611 the great Gustavus from that of his still greater grandson. The one had raised the edifice and given it internal strength, the other was to crown it with a glory that should astonish Europe. But between the two there intervene three reigns so chequered as to show but little progress. The wars which Gustavus had foreseen burst forth almost immediately upon his

A.D. death. Eric, the eldest of his sons, and his successor,
 ——— rushed headlong to the struggles which his father's
 wisdom had declined. He revenged the insult of the
 Danish Kings by himself assuming the arms of
 1563-70 Denmark and of Norway, and accepted a struggle,
 which, though it ended by establishing the maritime
 supremacy of Sweden within the Baltic, exhausted the
 resources of his country. He aimed again at conquest
 in Livonia. The Knights of the Cross and Sword,
 1561 unable to defend their provinces against the increasing
 covetousness of their neighbours, had surrendered many
 of them to Poland, in order to purchase her support in
 the hereditary possession of the rest. The transaction
 had given rise to claims and to disputes, in which each
 neighbouring power appeared to think that it might
 share with advantage; and Eric fought to add some
 1561 of the dismembered provinces to his own. He began
 a struggle which lasted for a hundred and sixty years,
 and which, during his own reign at least, increased the
 burdens without adding to the glories of his country.
 The nation murmured in its distress. The temper of
 the King, now cruel and arbitrary, gave other causes
 of dissatisfaction. His severities displeased his sub-
 jects; his brothers rose against him; and the too
 1568 familiar tale of defeat, imprisonment, and death
 completes the history of an unhappy reign.

John, who succeeded to Eric, was more fortunate in
 1570 his wars; and, after wisely concluding a peace with
 Denmark, he vigorously attacked the Russians, whose
 progress in Livonia was threatening his own. Their
 weakness favoured his enterprise. The Czar, attacked
 by Tartars on the south, could not defend his northern

conquests; the Swedes re-entered upon and even extended their ancient possessions. But John, if fortunate in his wars, brought trouble upon his country. He had married Catherine, the last princess of the House of Jagellon, and he aimed at securing the Polish throne for Sigismund his son, who might rule eventually over a Swedo-Polish empire almost encircling the Baltic lake. But in prospect of this throne he had brought up his son a Catholic, and he had thus sown the seeds of fatal strife. His own sympathies or policy began to incline him towards the same faith, and his latter years were disquieted by the distrust and opposition which his attempts to restore its exercise in Sweden provoked. After his death the flame blazed yet more fiercely. Sigismund, already King of Poland, determined to enforce the faith in which he had grown up, and his fate, after a reign which was little more than nominal, might well have served as a warning to later sovereigns. He aroused a civil war; he found his uncle, the last surviving son of the great Gustavus, assuming the lead of the national party; he was defeated, and pronounced incapable of reigning; and, after obstinately refusing all terms of accommodation, he saw his uncle ascending the Swedish throne, from which he and his children were now alike excluded. Sweden escaped the sacrifice of her faith, and she escaped the fall to being the province of a mightier kingdom. In Charles IX. she found for the first time a sovereign whose rule recalled in some degree the greatness of his father. The same activity and breadth of mind was present in him, and order and strength at home again returned.

A.D.

1582

1592-99

1599

A.D. Abroad his fortune varied. Russia had sunk so low
— beneath intestine conflicts and foreign enemies that
1611 the Swedes were able to push their conquests as far
as Novgorod, and that ambassadors arrived to purchase peace by the offer even of their crown. But Sigismund and the Poles had seized upon Livonia, and
1611 Denmark, reviving the old quarrels and inventing new ones, again began war. Charles in his old age became unequal to these struggles. He had a son, however, who was able to supply his place, and who by his share in these northern wars was now to gain the experience which should fit him to command the armies of Europe.

Gustavus Adolphus had been born in 1594. He had engaged under the direction of his father in the Danish war when he was but sixteen; and in the following year, after that father's death, he continued it from his own choice. For eighteen years from his accession he was struggling in the North, and winning fame upon the sandy plains around the Baltic sea. Within those years he fought against the Danes, the Russians, and the Poles. The Danes alone gained some advantage over him; the young sovereign of
1613 nineteen had to accept what he himself regarded as a disadvantageous peace. But from this time the course of victory began. Left free to turn to other enemies he drove the Russians from the Baltic to their inland homes. Their nation had not recovered from its years of anarchy; their sovereign, the young Michael Romanof, was hardly yet secure upon his throne; and Ingria and Carelia, that coast for which his ancestors
1617 had yearned, were formally surrendered to the

Swedish conqueror. Poland next fell beneath his power. The continued hostility of his cousin Sigismund was punished; Livonia, and even parts of Prussia were wrested from him. And when still higher aims again diverted the attention of Gustavus to new fields of war, he was able to secure a truce 1629 which left him in possession of wide conquests that extended even to the Vistula.

These wars have not indeed the interest of the great strife that succeeded to them. They were fought in regions that were distant, against enemies who were comparatively obscure. Yet their importance in the history of Sweden is great. They were wars that added to the glory and that were meant to add also to the greatness of the country. Gustavus was a statesman as well as a soldier. He had aimed at raising his people to be a rich and a commercial nation. To this end he had welcomed foreign exiles, and had made plans for a commercial union with Holland and the Protestant States of Germany. To this end also his wars were to serve. His conquests from Russia and from Poland not only precluded those Powers from becoming rivals on the Baltic, but gave into his hand the great outlets for the trade of northern Europe. Step by step he had advanced; and could he now but secure the shores of Pomerania the whole continent would be thrown open to the enterprise of his people.

Already he had won the respect and the admiration of his subjects. His strict regard for law and order, his wisdom in the conciliation of his nobles, his earnestness in consulting all upon affairs of public importance, had given a strength and a security to his

A.D.
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government without which it could hardly have borne the trial of his long absences in foreign wars. These wars were now to be more serious and more distant still; yet during their whole course the allegiance of his Swedish subjects never faltered towards their absent King.

While Gustavus had been conquering in Russia and in Poland, the Thirty Years' War had raged in Germany. During this time the Northern princes had been beaten and disheartened. Christian IV. had been driven back
1627 to Denmark; and the duchy of Mecklenburg had been given to the victorious general of the Imperial forces. A power hostile to his schemes, hostile to the religion for which his people had so lately risen, was now threatening Gustavus. He was urged into the war by thoughts of his own safety; he was urged further by the entreaties of the German princes who looked to him for support, by the promises of France become jealous of Austria, and by those of England and the United Provinces become fearful for their faith; and ambition counselling the acceptance of these prompt-
1630 ings he landed in the summer of 1630 upon the shores of Pomerania.

The Duchy speedily submitted to him. He thus gained a footing upon the continent, important for advance or for retreat, and he could now press onward to head the allies. He came however to find them mistrustful and jealous of his power. Fearful of Austria, fearful of rekindling the war and of delivering themselves into the hand of an ambitious foreigner, they hesitated to play their parts. The electors of Brandenburg and Saxony had even to be compelled to give a

passage to his troops ; and, when the fall of Magdeburg and all its horrors came, the loss was laid, and not unjustly, before the door of those who might have helped but had impeded a deliverer. A.D.
1631

For a year the King of Sweden stood alone in Germany. Even thus however his strength increased ; and the Emperor, who had smiled at the idea of the King of Snow, who would melt so speedily as he moved southward, began to find that his own power was dissolving, and that all Mecklenburg as well as Pomerania was being gradually won from him. In 1631, the Landgrave of Hesse declared for Sweden. He was the first of the German princes to embrace voluntarily the alliance, and an Imperial army under Tilly was sent to chastise his defection. Saxony and Brandenburg, who had wavered and now feared that their wavering would be punished, were terrified into seeking the same alliance. Gustavus at last had found confederates ; and he justified their trust by victory for them upon the field of Leipzig.

One blow had now laid open all Germany before him. The Imperialists were shattered and in retreat, and could not have barred his progress to Vienna. But his policy dissuaded him from such a glorious march. He chose more prudently to turn towards the west, and there raise up among the princes of the Empire a strength more solid than he could have gained by any exploits however dazzling in the east. His march to Franconia and the Rhine was everywhere a triumph. The smaller States accepted him with eagerness as their protector ; the larger ones, unable to resist, and abandoned by their princes, were occupied

A.D. by his troops. Bavaria itself was conquered and
overrun; the empty palaces of Munich received the
Swedish King. The conqueror of Tilly, the champion
of Protestantism, Gustavus now added to his fame by
the justice and the generosity which he everywhere
displayed. Already there were visions of an Empire
in which he himself should be the head; and Ferdinand
had now indeed to put forth his strength against an
enemy become so formidable.

But the dream of power, so bright, was brief. The
Imperialists had at length awakened; and in the
midst of his triumphs Gustavus heard of the recall of
Wallenstein, the one man who had seemed able to
stand against him. An army, called together by the
magic of his great adversary's name, and recruited by
the troops of the dispossessed princes, was advancing
upon him. It was a summons to defend his conquests,
the commencement of a struggle, which, however
glorious, was in its end to prove a fatal one.

Each army doubtful of itself waited upon the other,
and time and strength were wasted in tedious
operations around Nuremberg. Sickness and famine
thinned the ranks of both, and with the close of
summer the withdrawal of Wallenstein towards
Saxony appeared to end the probabilities of an
engagement. But Gustavus, fearing for his vacillating
1632 allies, pursued his enemy. At length, near Lutzen he
seemed to have found his opportunity. "The Lord,"
he said, "hath delivered him into my hand;" and,
seizing the occasion, he hazarded a battle. The
memorable strife which followed, the return of absent
regiments to share and make more doubtful the

fortunes of the day, the death of Gustavus by an unknown hand, and the fierce energy and final triumph of his troops, are the last scenes that have to be told in the history of the Swedish King. On that field was finished the career of one whose deeds had been as bright, whose virtues had been brighter than those of any conqueror of former ages. There perished one who had achieved a name, not merely as a soldier, but as a sovereign and a man.*

The flames of war however were not extinguished in the grave of Gustavus. The Swedish army was still a power in Germany, and it had captains, trained in a great school, prepared to lead it. Christina, the daughter of Gustavus, a child of six years old, succeeded to his crown; but his friend and chancellor, Oxenstierna, directed the whole policy of his country, and the designs of Gustavus were still proceeded with, as though he had been yet alive, by one whose indefatigable labours and unsurpassed sagacity have ranked him among the ablest ministers of any age. Saxony was now entered, and the wavering Elector was forced to recognise that the alliance once concluded with the Swedish King still bound him to the Swedish nation. At Heilbron in 1633, the Chancellor, as 1633 representing Sweden, was acknowledged to be the chief of the Protestant league. Yet still it became apparent that the spirit which had led the war was gone; it was a statesman, not a soldier now, that ruled affairs; and from the death of Gustavus the broad path of victory becomes narrowed and obscure, the great end that was to be won in Germany is gradually

* "The only just conqueror." Schiller.

A.D. — lost sight of, and the establishment of a Baltic Sovereignty is accepted in the place of a Protestant Empire over the north of Europe.

1634 The battle of Nordlingen in 1634 was the decisive blow which drove the Swedish armies from the south. Twelve thousand men were lost, and their general was made a prisoner. The allies began to shrink from what had now become a losing game; and Hesse Cassel alone, the last as it had been the first, remained upon the Swedish side. Henceforth the war was in the north. The defection of allies had to be punished:
1636 and upon the field of Wittstock, and in the ravage of their country, the Saxons felt some remnant of Gustavus' power. The possession of Pomerania was next to be secured; for Brandenburg, with the
1637 Imperial support, was claiming it upon the death of its last childless Duke. Even Denmark, through native jealousy and Austrian influence, seemed turning to make her profit of these times. The names of Baner, Torstenson, and Wrangel, are those of the defenders of their country's fame. Under their hands, amidst the exhaustion of long years, the war was obstinately continued. The days of brilliancy perhaps were over;
1644 but Pomerania was defended, Holstein and Jutland
1645 were overrun, and both Denmark and Saxony were terrified into a peace. And when at last in 1648, the
1648 Treaty of Westphalia was signed, Sweden retired from the war, no longer a Scandinavian power only but a continental one, with the rights of religion assured, with indemnities granted, and with the possession of the whole of Pomerania and Mecklenburg, together with the secularised bishoprics of Bremen and

Werden, which were recognised as Imperial fiefs under the Swedish crown.

A.D.

The stride which had been made by Sweden was enormous. She had sprung forth armed into the company of nations; and, though hardly known upon the continent before, was now acknowledged as one of the great powers of Europe. At the age of twenty-three Christina ruled over a kingdom which had secured respect abroad, which had adopted under the wise guidance of Oxenstierna a settled constitution at home, and which was now reposing upon a glorious peace. She had a throne which any potentate might envy, and the opportunity which it afforded for the cultivation and diffusion of the literary tastes which she had shown encouraged the belief that she would value its possession. The world, however, was disappointed in its expectation. Christina found herself, an impulsive woman, a philosopher in her tastes, set over a nation whose education had been the camp, and whose arts were those of war. The cares of royalty were burdensome to her, her people were unsympathetic; and she chose to exchange her crown ¹⁶⁵⁴ for the ease of private life and the free pursuit of more congenial surroundings. There is no parallel, as has been said, for a descent so voluntary from such a throne; yet her fame, it may be, has benefited by her act. The after-life we read is that of a vain, imperious, and revengeful woman, whose faults would have appeared more terrible upon the throne than they have done in the comparative obscurity of a private station.

Her cousin, Charles Gustavus, her husband as she

A.D. had once promised he should be, had been, after long remonstrances upon the part of the Estates, declared her successor; and the nation under its new sovereign turned again to war. While Christina wandered among the courts of Europe she heard of conquests that extended wide the fame of her successor. The King of Poland had dared again to claim the Swedish throne, denying the title of its new occupant. He learnt with wasted fields and conquered capital the
1656 lesson of his presumption. Charles traversed the whole country, receiving everywhere the submission of the inhabitants; Cracow itself was occupied; and the Elector of Brandenburg, the Great Elector, now recognising his power, agreed to become confederate with him. Visions of the crown of Poland, and of a northern Empire, not very different from that which had been dreamt of by Gustavus, began to float before him. But Charles had not the power to hold what he had so speedily acquired. The Poles began to rise against him; they harassed his army upon every side. In vain did he conquer beneath the walls
1656 of Warsaw in a battle which became famous as having lasted for three days. His ally, the Elector of Brandenburg, left him. New enemies were springing up around him. The Russians had entered Livonia; the Austrians and the Danes were preparing to unite with the Poles; and again, as after the days of Gustavus, the dream of empire vanished, and the schemes of ambition were reduced to the earlier and more humble aim of the acquisition of a Baltic province.

1657 The commencement of hostilities by Denmark

became a signal to Charles to turn northwards. Leaving Poland and the hoped-for conquest of Prussia to his brother, he marched on Jutland and overran the whole peninsula. A winter severer than is often known now aided his projects. The frozen currents which divided the Danish Islands, and which hardly a single peasant had ever dared to cross, were made to bear his army and his cannon; and the success of the passage, if it did not justify the risk, excused it. Funen and Sealand in succession were astonished by the presence of their enemy. Copenhagen was threatened; and the King of Denmark, with his enemy at his gates, was forced to conclude a peace. The three provinces of Scania, Halland, and Bleking, provinces inestimable in value as completing the dominions of Charles upon the south, were surrendered; and even half of Norway, in addition, passed into the conqueror's power. A.D. 1658

It might well have been thought that enough had been exacted; but the weakness of Denmark encouraged further schemes, and the peace was hardly concluded before it was broken. If Charles could not obtain the Polish crown, it might still be open to him to conquer that of Denmark, and by establishing the seat of his empire upon the Sound to become master of the Baltic sea. The Danish Islands were again invaded, and Copenhagen was besieged. The Danes, however, had now found allies. The Dutch, as jealous as had been the Hanse Towns of any single power's predominance within the Baltic, had leagued with them. A doubtful contest for two years ensued; and when Charles in the midst of his warfare was 1660

A.D. surprised by death, his last injunctions recommended
— peace to his successor.

The Swedish arms had known defeat ; their leader was no more ; and the crown had fallen to a child. The ministers who ruled for Charles XI. concurred in the necessity for peace ; and the almost simultaneous
1660-61 treaties of Oliva, Kardis, and Copenhagen, became a conclusion of hostilities. Poland surrendered Esthonia and Livonia ; her sovereign renounced his claim upon the Swedish crown : Russia gave up the frontier conquests she had lately won : and Denmark, though recovering some portion of her recent losses, confirmed anew the cession of Halland, Scania, and Bleking. The victories of Charles thus bore their fruit ; they added to his country's strength as well as to her fame ; and now, when every remnant of continental power is lost, he is still gratefully remembered as the sovereign who gave to Sweden the three Danish provinces, acquisitions that have proved more enduring and more indispensable than any of the wider conquests that have added lustre to his fame.

It is worth pausing to note the points of similarity between the history of Charles X. and that of Gustavus Adolphus. Both, fighting for a Baltic sovereignty, achieved successes which encouraged higher aims ; both perished early in the midst of their wars ; and both left children to succeed them without having attained their ends. As it had been in the reign of Christina, so was it under Charles XI. ; the hopes and schemes of the preceding reign were allowed to drop ; and an interval succeeds in which the rule of a less daring or successful sovereign becomes a respite from the fiery chronicle of war.

Peace was continued during the minority of the new King. Germany was still resting from the Thirty Years' War; France had not yet put forth her schemes under Louis XIV. These were not years, however, that brought honour or prosperity to the country. The education of the young King was neglected, and the divisions of parties disordered the state. Some coveted the gains of war, the gold which France began to offer, as she had done before, for the Swedish alliance. There were others who strove against such tendencies; and these for a time were able to persuade the country to join against the French King and to unite with England and Holland in the Triple Alliance to restrain his encroachments. But again the old appetite for conquest and the sympathy with France prevailed; and again after a brief respite the country entered upon war which this time was almost to prove fatal to her.

The armies of Louis XIV. were ravaging the Rhine; 1673 the Elector of Brandenburg was fighting there against them. The French ambassador had overcome the hesitation of the Swedish ministers; they had accepted the pay of France, and they hoped for the plunder of her enemies; and in 1673 their army entered Brandenburg. Professing peace, they acted war; until their object could no longer be concealed. The country was devastated, so as to recall the miseries of the Thirty Years' War; and the Elector, hearing of the sufferings of his people, became obliged to fly to their assistance. He came; he saw; he conquered. A rout 1675 at Fehrbellin drove back the Swedish army discomfited if not disgraced. New enemies then rose around them.

A.D. — The Empire declared itself against them. The martial Bishop of Munster joined with the Elector; and the whole of Pomerania was lost. The Danes took Rugen; they defeated the Swedish fleet; and invaded their old province of Scania. The war was a most fatal one; and had it not been for the protecting hand of Louis XIV. the country must have descended low among the ranks of nations. The Peace of Nymegen however 1679 saved her. The Great Monarch stipulated for the restitution of all that had been lost to his ally; and the conquests of Gustavus and of Charles X., which had been imperilled by their descendant, were preserved to Sweden by the magnanimity of a King of France.

Unfortunate in his experiences of war, Charles now relinquished its prosecution, and his energies were devoted during the remainder of his reign to increasing the royal power. He had received his kingdom as a child under a constitution which the wisdom of the great Oxenstierna had planned but which was to change its character beneath his rule. The government had rested with a senate, which, chosen from the nobles, gratified their pride, while the rights of the lower estates of clergy, burgesses, and peasants, to take part in the general diets and to control the levies both of men and money, had been fully recognised. Charles aimed, however, at being an absolute and not a constitutional King. He availed himself of the popular dislike to the nobles, and issued an enquiry into their government under his minority. Crown grants were next resumed, and the great offices of state were kept empty. An obedient diet even 1682 applauded these measures, and finally declared the

repeal of the law which limited the royal succession to male heirs, pronounced in favour of the divine right and absolutism of kings, and thus annulled the functions of the senate, which for the future existed only in name. Whether such changes could be accomplished without injustice, or at least without the semblance of it, is doubtful, and historians have differed on the point. We read, however, of no disturbances at home, a sign that their causes were either wanting or insufficient; we read instead, after these changes, of a continued and not merely a temporary tranquillity, of a government justifying, if this can ever be, its origin by its success. There are the records of prudence and economy, of a national debt extinguished, and a surplus bequeathed, of foreign kingdoms inviting the mediation of a power which had commended itself to their notice by good government at home.

Charles XII. when he succeeded to the throne, was 1697 in a position very similar to that of Frederick the Great; he inherited a strength which his father had prepared. The resemblance to the great Prussian monarch may be carried further. From a child he seemed to pass into a man and to put away childish things. Though but fifteen he was declared of age, and he showed at once that he was determined to rule alone. The boy whose exercises and whose studies had until now been those of the chase astonished his counsellors in the midst of their deliberations. He heard that his enemies were in league against him, and while he declared that nothing should induce him to enter upon an unjust war, he boldly announced that he would never cease from a just one.

A.D. One by one his enemies soon felt his power.
— Denmark, the first of the confederates to take up arms, began by an attack upon the Duke of Holstein Gottorp, the close ally of Sweden. The young King
1700 at once made boldly for Copenhagen. He bombarded the town, and prepared for its investment. His energy, so unexpected, had its effect. The King of Denmark became inclined to peace, and within six weeks the first of the three enemies had been humbled. The Russians who were besieging Narva were next to be subdued. Charles marched against them, and in a battle, which from the later fame of the contending monarchs has become memorable, defeated them with confusion. Eight thousand men discomfited an army which has been numbered by various calculations at from forty to eighty thousand. The prisoners, at once innumerable and contemptible, were dismissed: to Charles they seemed not worth retaining; to Peter they were men who might have learnt already a lesson in the art of conquest.

Charles, satisfied with the blow that he had inflicted, turned now to his third and, as he believed, most formidable assailant. Augustus, King of Poland, had entered upon war for the gratification of his own ambition and against the wishes of his people. He had hoped to recover the Baltic provinces that had been lost under his predecessors, and he had thought that he might provide an outlet for the too turbulent spirits of his Polish subjects. But he had not counted upon the greatness of his enemy, nor upon the disaffection of a people whom he was forcing into war. Charles traversed Courland and Livonia. He arrived

in Poland to find a nation protesting against its being
called to play a part in war, with many of its nobles
ready to give aid even against their King. One year
sufficed to make him master of the country. War-
saw and Cracow fell into his power; two battles, at
Clissau and Pultesk, destroyed all hopes upon the
part of Augustus; and within a second year a Diet
assembled at Warsaw had proclaimed the dethrone-
ment of the Elector of Saxony, and had given his
crown to Stanislas Leczinski at the bidding of the
conqueror.

The triumph of Charles was not yet completed.
He followed Augustus into Saxony, and exacted from
him the humiliation of ratifying the decrees which
despoiled him of his throne. Even the powers of
western Europe were now becoming sensible of the
might of the young conqueror; and as he lay in
meditative idleness within his camp in Saxony, he
received the ambassadors of Louis XIV. and the
flattering homage of Marlborough. The design of
punishing the Czar was perhaps confirmed under an
influence which dreaded any interference with the
schemes of the Grand Alliance; and in September,
1707, Charles, with an army rich in spoils and glory,
abandoned his easy life in Saxony, and marched, in-
tending to chastise the Czar as he had chastised the
King of Poland, to conquer until the frontiers of Asia
should re-echo with his name.

The Russians, who during his absence had invaded
Poland, fell back at his approach; and again he
traversed the country as an unopposed conqueror.
By the middle of the year 1708 his army had reached

A.D.

1702

1703

1704

1707

1708

A.D. the Dnieper, and the Czar, who in his anxiety would
 — have made peace, had learnt that he would only treat
 at Moscow. The fatalities, however, which were to
 overwhelm the Swedish monarch now commenced.
 He refused to wait for the army which was to bring
 him his supplies. He abandoned the road to Moscow,
 along which he had advanced so far ; and trusting to
 the promises of help from Mazeppa, the chief of the
 Cossacks of the Ukraine, he turned towards the south.
 Misfortune followed on misfortune. He traversed
 plains which had been wasted by the Russian troops,
 and found that even the capital of the Cossack chief
 had been sacked before he reached it. The reinforce-
 ments for which he had refused to wait were cut to
 pieces before they joined him. The approach of
 winter intensified his sufferings ; the approach of
 1709 spring beheld his army wasted and enfeebled. To
 secure provisions he now besieged Pultawa ; and im-
 patient of success forced on a battle with its defenders.
 The great catastrophe had come. The Swedish army
 fought bravely but ineffectually ; the triumph of the
 Russians was complete ; and Charles abandoning him-
 self to despair fled from the field.

In the days of his prosperity he had engaged in an
 alliance with the Porte, and that power now gave him
 refuge in his misfortune. The king of Sweden passed
 1709-14 five years in Turkey ; five years, which form an
 unworthy episode in his career, during which he
 neglected his own dominions, and only strove to urge
 the Sultan into a war which should revenge his in-
 juries upon the Russians. He seemed at length to
 1711 be successful ; he saw the Ottoman army advancing

to the Pruth. But while he heard of all that might have been accomplished there, he heard also of the amazing treaty which had allowed the Russians to go free. Disappointed continually in his hopes he indulged the petulancy of his spirit. From a hero he sank into a wayward child. He quarrelled with those around him. And the sovereign, who had been received with the honours of a guest, had at last to be subjected to the restraints of a prisoner. Meanwhile his northern enemies had risen to unite again and to dismember his dominions. While the Czar, not satisfied with his triumph on the south, was adding Finland, Carelia, and Livonia, to his empire, Augustus of Saxony was recovering Poland, the King of Denmark was renewing his pretensions upon Holstein, and had even invaded the southern provinces of Sweden itself. A glorious repulse of the Danes in Scania was the one bright incident in a succession of disasters. The whole continent was gradually lost. 1710 Pomerania, which, had Charles permitted it, might have been neutralised, was invaded by Russians, Poles, and Prussians. The Elector of Hanover, now King of England, became a sharer in the plunder by the purchase of Bremen and Werden which the Danes had conquered. The Swedish army, upon which all hopes had rested, was obliged to capitulate in 1714. Stralsund and Wismar remained the only possessions of importance; and the first, surrounded by its enemies, appeared already tottering to its fall. The necessities of the country called loudly for a deliverer; the people were murmuring; there were schemes for making the Princess Ulrica, the King's sister, regent; and some

A.D.

A.D. looked forward even to depriving Charles of the
— authority which he seemed no longer to care to hold.

The insensibility however which he had long dis-
1714 played was at length broken. Secretly leaving Turkey,
the King of Sweden traversed Europe as a disguised
horseman, and appeared in the dead of night before
the gates of Stralsund. But his arrival, joyful as
it proved to his subjects, could not avail to save the
remnant of his continental possessions. He could no
longer conquer, he could only defend himself. Stral-
1715 sund, after arresting for a year the gaze of Europe,
1716 was forced to yield; the loss of Wismar followed; and
Charles, abandoning the continent, retired, as it was
thought, to defend and to lose his own kingdom.

There now appears a new character upon the scene,
and the varied fortunes of Charles experience a new
direction. Not less astonishing than is the life at
Bender, when compared with that preceding it, is the
policy and the operations which distinguish the later
from the earlier portion of the reign. The great
abilities and the financial skill of a new minister
procured for Sweden some revival from her weakness.
The Baron Gortz, a Franconian, at the sacrifice of his
popularity and eventually of his life, brought order
and comparative prosperity to the exhausted kingdom.
He inaugurated also a new policy, a policy of peace
and of new alliances. By tempting Russia from
hostility into alliance he attempted to secure a final
and an honourable settlement of the troubles of the
North. Finland and Denmark were to become
Russian: in exchange, Pomerania was to be restored
to Sweden, and Norway annexed to it. Visions even

of thrones to be distributed rose before Charles. Stanislas, the Duke of Holstein, and even the Pretender in England, seemed now about to become his debtors for their restored crowns. But such designs, like all others throughout the life of Charles, proved evanescent; and he had hardly begun by the siege of Fredericsshall to attempt their execution, when a ball directed probably by an assassin's hand, put a close to 1718 the career which had so astonished and so troubled Europe.

Charles fell; and the greatness of Sweden fell with him. For a century the country had retained a leading rank in Europe. She had been secured by her position from foreign foes; she had had access to the eastern and southern shores of the Baltic; and she had had kings whose ambition had found excuses for penetrating to the heart of Europe and dazzling the world by their successes. But her position was now altered. The succession of her conquerors was lost. No king arose to equal even the last and most unfortunate of her three great sovereigns. Foreign kingdoms also, that had grown into their manhood, now circumscribed her power. The strength of Prussia had replaced the weakness and divisions that had made the southern shores of the Baltic an easy prey; Russia had risen under a great emperor from the barbarism and debasement under which it had lain; and Sweden, always striving to set foot upon a continent from which nature had divided her, became at length constrained to acknowledge her position, and to accept a lower but more natural place among the ranks of nations.

A.D.
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A.D. Internal causes combined during the eighteenth century to accelerate decline. The divisions of parties followed upon the exhaustion of long years of war. Men now associated a warlike policy with the absolutism of the crown. They turned indeed the odium which might have rested upon Charles upon his minister, whose measures were expiated upon the scaffold; but they began also to scheme for the diminution of the royal power. The succession to the throne gave them an opportunity. The lineal heir was Charles Frederick, Duke of Holstein Gottorp, the son of the eldest sister of the late King, and himself the favourite and the destined heir of Charles. The
1718 actual successor was Ulrica Eleanor, the younger sister of the King, whose ambition and whose vigilance prevailed over the diffidence and the inaction of her young nephew. Ulrica had the independence of her ancestors; but to acquire the crown she was constrained to see the abolition of those rights which earlier sovereigns had laboured to secure. She could not rule by a hereditary claim; she owed her title merely to election; and the work of earlier sovereigns by her accession was undone. The nobles, long chafing under the power of the crown, now gained concessions from her necessities. They next, mistrusting her, began to scheme to place her husband upon the throne, and her dethronement was perhaps only
1720 prevented by her abdication. The election of Frederick of Hesse Cassel, which took place in 1720, was a second and final blow to all hereditary claims. A German, not even a descendant of the House of Vasa, thus occupied the throne; and in the weakness

of their new sovereign the nobles found, as they had hoped, fresh opportunities for the increase of their own power. A.D. —

Peace was not only needed by the exhaustion of the country but was now demanded by the ambition of an aristocracy who required its leisure for the consummation of their plans. By successive treaties Sweden saw herself despoiled of provinces, some portion at 1720 least of which a stronger sovereign might have retained. The town of Stettin, with the islands of Usedom and Wollin, passed to Prussia ; Bremen and Werden were relinquished to Hanover ; the right of exemption from all dues upon the Sound, which had been conceded to Sweden by former treaties, was now surrendered and a sum of money was paid, to Denmark ; the Elector of Saxony was recognized as King of Poland ; and finally, the whole coast of the Baltic from Viborg to Riga, an extent including Livonia, Ingria, Esthonia, and part of Carelia, with the adjacent islands of Œsel and Dago, were ceded to Russia, whose enmity had 1721 revived as the schemes of alliance with her had faded. The nation wearied and exhausted by her long course of wars acquiesced in these surrenders ; but her glory had now departed, and she became thenceforth a petty kingdom in the hands of factions who could only excite the contempt of the surrounding nations whom they would have aspired to rule.

A period of fifty years succeeds which presents the 1718-71 spectacle in Sweden of royalty degraded and factions exalted. By a new constitution, accepted in 1719, all 1719 power had been virtually transferred into the hands of the Diet composed of the four orders of nobles, clergy,

A.D. — burgesses, and peasants. The sovereign was merely the instrument to register their decrees, and the government became no longer a monarchy but an oligarchy. Factions contended for the authority which the crown had lost, and names as strange but perhaps as rational as those of Whigs and Tories distinguished the rival parties. The Hats were favourers of a French alliance; they hoped for war with Russia which should restore some of their provinces, and they trusted to the support of Louis XIV., the son-in-law of the deposed Stanislas of Poland. The Caps upon the other hand demanded peace, and would have allied with Russia and with England. The struggles of the contending parties distracted the kingdom. In 1733, upon the death of the King of Poland, the rival interests of Russia and of France, as regarded the vacant throne, produced a crisis. The Hats were able in pursuance of their policy to direct an expedition in support of Stanislas and of the French. They sacrificed the interests of their country. The Russians advanced on Finland, and the whole of that vast province was lost. Some portion of it was never restored, and the remainder could only be recovered by the nation agreeing at the bidding of Russia to accept Adolphus Frederick of Holstein as the successor of their childless King.

The reign of Frederick I. had been disastrous. When Adolphus himself succeeded in 1751 he attempted to assert the lost authority of the crown, but he found himself as powerless as his predecessor, and his reign was as inglorious. Again the Hats engaged in war. The influence of France, then fight-

ing against Prussia in the Seven Years' War, procured the invasion of Brandenburg. But the efforts of the Swedes, ill organized, had no success, and though intended to inspire terror they only excited ridicule. The country was sinking fast to be a cypher before the world. Degraded and powerless, through the impotence of the crown, through the strife of factions, and through corruption so prevailing that even the seats in the Diet were habitually bought and sold, it had ceased to command the respect of its neighbours, and but for its isolated position might have ceased to be a kingdom. A.D. 1757-62

The reign of Gustavus III. who succeeded to the throne in 1771, was from the first a protest against these evils. Unable to attack them openly, he dissembled. "I glory," said he, "in being the first citizen of a free people." And while he played the citizen-king he studied to secure the affection of his subjects, which should enable him to carry out a plan of revolution.

The attempt was dangerous, and his own life was likely to be sacrificed. His adherents had been distributed about the kingdom, that they might aid in the success of the undertaking. The first step was the organized revolt of Christiansand. It was made an excuse for the assembling of an army. Stockholm was hardly ripe, yet Gustavus was hurried into action. At the moment that the Senate had decreed the arrest of their now suspected King, he himself appeared in their midst. The guards whom he had gained were with him, and the senators were made his prisoners in their chamber. From this moment he was absolute. 1772

A.D. The next morning a constitution which had been
— prepared was read before the Estates. They found
that their power had fallen from them, that they were
no longer to sit, as they had done, unbidden and for
any time, that the command of the forces and the
appointments to offices were transferred to the King
and that their voice henceforward would almost
entirely be confined to sanctioning or to disapproving
the declarations of war.

Such changes naturally proved unacceptable to many; but the affection of the humbler orders for their King, and his own wisdom in the exercise of his new found authority, deprived the opposition of its strength. Gustavus had advantages which other sovereigns had not possessed. He was the first king since Charles XII. who was a native Swede; he was the first who was able to address his people in their own tongue. A natural charm of manner added to his popularity; and his measures now seemed about to justify the affection of his subjects. During its early years his reign was one of beneficence and peace. There were still, however, some who never could forget what they had lost, and the under current of a rankling opposition was ever present and frustrated many of his endeavours.

The weakness thus entailed upon the kingdom received its illustration when Gustavus engaged in war.

The ambitious designs of Catherine II. had aroused the hostility of Turkey and the apprehensions of Europe. Gustavus beheld, as he thought, his opportunity. He determined to profit by the moment of
1788 her difficulties, and in 1788 invaded Finland. The

time had been well chosen; the north of Russia was comparatively defenceless, and for a season there was fear even at St. Petersburg. But Gustavus had omitted to consult the Senate, as his own constitution had required; and all hopes of victory were dashed by the conduct of his army. Prompted by an ignoble jealousy, and stimulated perhaps by bribes, his officers refused to advance as he had ordered. They recalled to him his omission, and refused even to stretch forth their hands towards the laurels which seemed to be awaiting them. Helpless and mortified the King returned. He was now exasperated by opposition. His early reverence for forms, his strict integrity of action, had already begun to vanish; and he now determined by a new stroke to secure his power. He was still popular, he was engaged in a war which the greater number of his people approved, and he had only to conquer the opposition of the nobles. An Act of Union and of Safety, as it was called, was 1789 submitted to the Lower Estates. It recognized the hereditary character of the crown, and provided for the independent action of the sovereign in matters of peace and war: in return for these admissions, it gave new rights to the people, though still reserving privileges for the nobility: and carrying this measure, partly by moral influence, but partly also by force, Gustavus found himself at length absolute. The war with Russia was then continued. A fleet sailed up the 1790 Gulf of Finland, and the great Empress heard in her palace the sound of the Swedish guns; but the success of the expedition, though sufficient to gratify the pride of the King, was not enough to secure for him

A.D. . concessions ; and peace, concluded in 1790, left all as it
— had been before the war.

1790

The attention of Sweden, like that of other countries, began now to be engrossed, and her policy to be influenced, by the great events in France which were beginning to arouse the apprehensions of Europe. Gustavus saw that the old alliance could no longer be maintained. The country to which by tradition the Swedes had turned, to which he himself had been indebted for much of his support and for many of his ideas of government, was now becoming inconsistent with itself and with its old friendships. He only saw however the opening scenes of the great drama that
1792 was played. Shot down at a masked ball in Stockholm, he died as all Europe had anticipated, the victim of the many enmities which he had excited ; and the direction of his country during the eventful years which followed was left to a successor. Gustavus IV.
1793 beheld the execution of Louis XVI., and felt the thrill of horror that ran through the courts of Europe. He saw the encroachments of the Republic in Germany, and mistrusted its aggressive policy. As yet however he did not venture to engage in war ; and the close of
1800 the century found him even uniting in the Maritime Confederacy, a league whose hostility to England made it the auxiliary of France. New causes however soon arose to increase his dissatisfaction. The murder of the Duke of Enghien, the assumption of the Imperial crown, the contemptuous treatment which was experienced at the hands of the new Emperor, were
1804 all keenly resented, and in 1804 the King no longer hesitated to declare war. The formation of a Northern

Confederacy was attempted. England and Russia joined with Sweden. Prussia entered later into the alliance. But to Austerlitz there succeeded Jena, and to Jena, Friedland and Eylau. The allies, upon whose support Gustavus had counted, were now defeated; and he himself, after a vain attempt to defend Stralsund, was obliged to abandon all Pomerania to the conquerors.

Prudence would now have counselled the discontinuance of war. The very nation in whom the King had trusted was preparing to lift up its heel against him. While Gustavus obstinately refused peace, and alone of the northern sovereigns was declining to accede to the Continental System, Russia eager for her share in the world which she had partitioned on the raft of Tilsit was declaring war against him. To the loss of Pomerania was now added the loss of Finland. The misfortunes of Gustavus however seemed only to incline him the more steadfastly to war. His country was threatened with a continuance of sufferings and losses, with the eventual extinction, as the rumour ran, even of her independence. In these extremities there were some who asserted that the King was mad; the popular impatience of his policy was declared; and at length a few conspirators dared boldly to seize him in his palace, and his subjects acquiesced in the deposition of their King.

Peace was now made. The descendants of Gustavus were excluded from the throne, and his brother, who became known as Charles XIII., was elected to it. The necessities of the time required the cession of all Finland, of the Aland isles, and of most of Bothnia,

A.D.
——

A.D. — to Russia; but, when the new sovereign acceded to the Continental System, the island of Rugen and Pomerania were restored to him, and the country obtained a short breathing space of peace.

The succession to the throne was then settled. Charles XIII. was childless; and a prince of Holstein Augustenburg was in the first instance declared his successor. But the death of this prince in 1810 reopened the question; and, among the names of other competitors, that of Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo, was brought forward. He had been one of Napoleon's marshals; and, as such, had fought, but with a generosity that was still remembered, against the Swedes during the reign of Gustavus IV.; and both Charles XIII. and his people, believing that they saw in this candidature the influence of Napoleon and the prospect of gratifying him, elected Bernadotte as their future King. From this time the new Prince Royal became in heart as well as by adoption a Swede. The government, from the infirmities of Charles XIII., was virtually in his hands; and, if the operations which he directed were fatal to his former friends, they were prompted by the true honour which led him to deserve the confidence which his new country had reposed in him.

Sweden was the ally of France, and had accepted a French marshal as her future King. But the arrogance of Napoleon was again to array the country in arms against him. The Continental System pressed heavily on trade; remonstrances were made; and evasions were attempted. The French Emperor 1810 was indignant; and war with England, or with him,

was made the alternative. But when the Swedes, so far obedient, had declared themselves against his enemy, they did not find that they escaped harsh treatment from the French. Their ships were seized upon suspicion; their continental possessions, so lately restored, were re-occupied. It seemed almost as grievous to be the friend as to be the enemy of the French nation; and Bernadotte, resenting the treatment, began to listen to the suggestions of Russia, who had already shown her disposition to secede from France, and soon accepted her alliance 1812 and made peace with England.

The conditions of the Russian treaty included a guarantee of each country's integrity and the promise of Norway to Sweden. By its terms, in the event of a war with France, the Swedes were to co-operate with the Russians in the north of Germany; and this agreement was fully carried out. As the armies passed on in 1812 upon their road to Moscow, the Swedes re-entered on their lost possessions, and prepared to bar their enemy's retreat. They fought in the general rising that ensued, and defeated the troops of Ney and Oudinot at Grossbeeren and Dennewitz: their Prince Royal inspired the plans which terminated at Leipzig. The reward for the services of Sweden was found in the annexation of Norway. Denmark, which had espoused the losing side, was compelled to cede her ancient dominion; and after a patriotic resistance on the part of the Norwegians, which the weakness of the King of Denmark compelled him to disavow, the union of the Scandinavian peninsula was at length ac-

A.D. 1841 accomplished. Sweden issued from her wars with her position strengthened and secured. She was excluded indeed from the continent; she had lost Finland irrecoverably to Russia; and her monetary needs now caused her to sell Pomerania to Prussia; but the provinces that she lost were provinces that had exposed her to danger, what she gained was a kingdom whose possession was a defence.

1818-44 Sweden, like Europe, rested from the toils of war, and, more fortunate than other countries, has not since engaged in them. The last of her old line of kings expired in 1818, and Bernadotte, under the style of Charles XIV. succeeded to the sovereignty which since his election as Crown Prince he had practically exercised. Living to the age of eighty, his reign was prolonged until 1844; and the tranquil succession since that time of a son and grandsons to his throne affords presumption that his dynasty is now securely established. Sweden, isolated by her position, and abstaining from interference in foreign politics, has ceased to attract attention. Her history up to the present time has been but the quiet record of internal progress, important to its inhabitants, but less interesting to strangers. Measures to repair the exhaustion of war, and to relieve the burden of debt, became the occupation of Charles XIV.'s reign; and the grateful remembrance of his subjects is the proof of the wisdom and of the success of his government. Among the public works that aided the prosperity of the country must be named the Gotha canal, an engineering enterprise which is still remarkable in Europe, and which after a labour of twenty years secured for the

trade of Stockholm an outlet to the German Ocean without passing through the Sound. The government of Norway, a kingdom keenly susceptible of any attempts against its independence, and jealous of the possession of the most democratic constitution that is associated with the name of monarchy, gave problems for succeeding reigns. The attempts at fusion between the two kingdoms failed, and they remained connected merely by a personal union under the same king with separate legislatures and separate ministries. But harmony has never seriously been interrupted, and in 1874 the fiftieth anniversary of the Union was celebrated at Christiania with general rejoicing.

Oscar I. who succeeded to his father in 1844, had 1844-59 the satisfaction of preserving his dominions in tranquillity, while other governments, that might have seemed more stable than his own, were being uprooted by revolutionary tumults. Both he and Charles XV. 1848 his son, saw wars around them that might well have been expected to involve their kingdom. Denmark, struggling for her Duchies, excited the deep sym- 1848-1863 pathy of Sweden; Russia, assailed in 1854 by the 1854 western Powers, appeared to tempt hostility on the part of her old adversary; but prudence counselled the abstention from all active measures. Charles XV. himself was not a sovereign who was averse to war. 1859-72 Impulsive and ambitious he longed to win again some greatness for his people. The idea of restoring Scandinavian unity was continually before him, and he would have fought as well as treated for its attainment. But the more sober prudence of his people restrained him from war, and his reign

A.D. continued one of unbroken peace. The great event
 — in it was a domestic measure, the reform of the
 legislature. The ancient government, which was now
 unique in Europe, by the four orders of nobles, clergy,
 burgesses, and peasants, had become unfitted for the
 despatch of public business. All projects stagnated
 1866 of two elective chambers in 1866 was a step that had
 been long called for by popular opinion and that has
 since been fully justified by its success. Oscar II.
 1872 succeeding to the crown in 1872, inherited a kingdom
 whose peace had lasted longer than that of any other
 State in Europe. It will probably be his object
 to preserve this peace, and to hand down his kingdom
 in the same tranquillity to a successor.

DENMARK, since the Thirty Years' War, had ceased
 to mingle in the affairs of Europe. She had had no
 sovereigns like Gustavus or Charles XII. to carry her
 fame among other nations, and for a century and a
 half she had been oppressed under an aristocracy that
 had weakened her by its growth. The power of the
 1523 nobility, which had first felt its strength in the
 dethronement of Christian II., had become established
 under the successors who came, but without his title,
 to the throne. The crown had been declared elective;
 and from sovereigns who were thus more influenced
 by hopes and fears successive privileges had been won.
 Not only the great offices of state, but the lordship of
 the soil, and even of its cultivators, were in the hands
 of the nobles. They alone were exempted from
 taxation, and they could even by their individual

authority exempt others. To secure their own power it became their policy to diminish that of the crown. They refused to sanction a standing army, which might have been turned against themselves, or to permit the development of mines and other royal properties which might have given wealth, and therefore power, to the King. For a man like Christian IV. such a position was intolerable; and from the time that he retired from the war he gave his efforts to opposing it. 1629 But the jealousy of the nobles was too strong; and, though the lower orders were in his favour, Christian died without accomplishing his projects, and could not 1648 even secure before his death the recognition of his son as his successor.

The whole nation, however, had begun to groan under the weight of an aristocracy, and the attempt to extort fresh privileges from Frederick III., the son of Christian, was opposed by the Lower Estates. The desire for relief was growing, and had it not been for a war with Sweden, which now occurred, some attempt to secure it would have probably been made. The new King had watched the course of Charles X. in Poland. He saw that enemies were rising up around the Swedish monarch, and he believed that by joining with those enemies he might secure both glory and 1657 advantage for his country. The event was a bitter disappointment to him. By a memorable march the Swedes invaded Jutland; they traversed the frozen straits to Copenhagen; and a humiliating peace was 1658 made a necessity for him. He gave up the old Danish provinces of Scania, Halland, and Bleking, the cradle of his people; he surrendered Trondhjem and

A.D. the north of Norway in addition. Even thus the
— peace he would have bought was not secured to him.
Charles aimed at nothing less than the subversion of
the Danish monarchy: its weakness tempted him to
1658 renew the war. Again the town of Copenhagen was
besieged; and, had it not been for the assistance of
the Dutch, whose presence made this second war a
doubtful one, the crown of Denmark might have
become the prize of the conqueror. As it was, by the
1660 Peace of Copenhagen, on the death of Charles, the
province of Trondhjem was restored to Frederick, but
the more cherished provinces upon the shores of the
Sound remained for ever in the hands of his enemies.

1660 Hardly had peace been signed when what is known
as the Revolution began. To the old grievances
against the aristocracy, who held the government, were
now added the loss of provinces and the accumulation
of debt. A cry arose from the whole nation. The
oppression and the contempt which they had met
united the burgesses and peasantry. The clergy, who
since the Reformation had belonged chiefly to the
lower orders, were now upon the side of the people,
and not as of old upon that of the nobles; and the
King, though not greedy of power, was naturally
ready to assist a party whose enemies were his own.
The Estates were summoned. More than a century
had passed since they had met; and they now met
angrily. The Lower Orders required as justice that
taxation should be equalized, and that crown lands,
instead of being held as hitherto by nobles only for
low payments, should be leased henceforward to the
highest bidder. The opposition which they received

provoked them to demand still more. Svane, Bishop of Zealand, at the head of the clergy, and Nansen, burgomaster of Copenhagen, were leaders. They proposed to strengthen the crown, and to render it hereditary, as the only safeguard against the aristocracy. The nobles, terrified, first hesitated, and then refused; they attempted even to dissolve the Diet by secretly escaping from the town; but their design was thwarted, they found themselves coerced, and at length they agreed to accept the proposition of the Lower Orders.

From this time the monarchy was absolute, and hereditary not only in the male but in the female line. The character of Frederick III. had aided the change. Such ambition as he may have had had been concealed, and the Revolution had appeared to be the work of his subjects rather than of their sovereign. He did not now abuse the power which he had gained, but he at once took measures to secure it. A standing army was decreed, and its support was ordered out of the taxation which was now equalized. Fortresses were erected, to be the salutary preventives of insurrection, and the obnoxious Senate was replaced by a privy council under the control of the King. The full measure of the changes that were made became apparent on the accession of Christian V. At his 1670 coronation the "Royal Act" was read, which had been passed in 1665, but had remained undivulged. By it an absolute authority was given to the King. The nobles might still enjoy the name of power, but its reality had passed from them; and now for the first time there were titles introduced in Denmark, in order

A.D. that the crown might appease with the shadow those
 ——— whom it had deprived of the substance.

1670-99 The reigns of Christian V. and of his son Frederick
 1699-1730 IV. have their chief interest in the wars in which
 Denmark became engaged. The loss of her old
 provinces weighed heavily upon her, and successive
 efforts, as opportunity arose, were made for their
 recovery. Christian V., encouraged by the victory of
 Fehrbellin, which the Great Elector gained over the
 1675 Swedes, declared war against them in 1675. The
 moment seemed propitious; the enemies of Sweden
 were advancing upon her; and the Danish forces
 were able not only to conquer in Pomerania, but to
 win a glorious victory over the Swedish fleet and to
 re-occupy for a time their ancient provinces. They
 conquered however without result. The powerful
 influence of Louis XIV. protected his ally; and Christian
 1679 became obliged to accept a peace which restored to
 Sweden all her losses. For twenty years there was
 no renewal of the war; but when King Charles XI. of
 1697 Sweden died, and a boy of fifteen succeeded to his throne,
 it seemed as if another opportunity had come. Frederick
 IV. united in alliance with the sovereigns of Poland
 and of Russia, monarchs who like himself were
 already scheming to profit by the inexperience of
 Charles XII. The independence of Holstein, a duchy
 in strict friendship and alliance with Sweden, was
 obnoxious to him, and he thought to crush it during
 the weakness of its protector. But Frederick in his
 attempt met treatment very similar to that his grand-
 father had received at the hands of Charles X. The
 young King of Sweden took up the contest with the

same energy and the same success as his great predecessor. Copenhagen was besieged by the boy whom she had affected to despise ; and within six weeks the kingdom had to purchase peace by the payment of an indemnity and by the recognition of the independence which she had sought to crush. A.D. 1700

Disappointed twice in her attempts at war, and hopeless of success against a sovereign whom all Europe dreaded, Denmark could only wait until some happier moment for her should arrive. That moment, however, came, when the defeat of Charles at Pultawa, his long self-exile in the south of Europe, and his abandonment of all care, as it seemed, for his northern dominions, had revived the schemes and expectations of his enemies. The Danes again appeared in arms ; and though they failed to recover their old provinces upon the shores of the Sound, they conquered Bremen and Werden upon the continent, and bore an honourable part in the operations which finally drove Charles across the Baltic. Their successes indeed appeared to be imperilled when Charles, again within his own peninsula, and strong in his meditated schemes of alliance with Russia, turned exasperatedly against Norway. But the might of the great monarch had deserted him ; his efforts had but small success ; and the bullet which closed his life at Fredericsshall relieved the apprehensions of his enemies. Denmark at length gained some reward for her exertions. The Peace of Fredericksborg, which was concluded in 1720, did not restore her ancient provinces ; but it gave her an indemnity, it restored to her the right, which she had lost since 1645, of exacting toll 1709 1712 1716 1720

A.D. from Swedish vessels in the Sound, it recognized her conquests of Bremen and Werden, and, finally, it gave her possession of the duchy of Sleswig, a possession which France and England came forward to guarantee.

The remainder of the eighteenth century was a time of peace, which Sweden had no power, and other kingdoms had no wish, to disturb. The Danish colonies began now to receive attention. An East
1618 Indian Company had been founded by Christian IV.; but bad administration, the difficulties with native princes, and the formidable rivalry of England and Holland, had checked its prosperity; and, though Frederick IV. endeavoured to support it, its existence could not be prolonged. Tranquebar however still remained to the Danish crown. In the West Indies St. Thomas had belonged to Denmark since 1671, and St. John and St. Croix were now added, the former by appropriation in 1719, the latter by purchase from France in 1733. Greenland also was re-colonised; and it was hoped that markets were thus formed which should extend the commerce of the country.

The succeeding reigns saw the peaceful prosperity
1730 of the country continued. The gloomy piety of Christian VI. did not abstract him from the cares of government; and the progress of education and of the arts are the chief feature of his reign. Every village was ordered to erect a school; and in the capital there was provision made, and encouragement afforded, for students at the University, which had been re-built and re-endowed. An academy of painting was founded; and foreign merit was invited by the

prospect of honours and rewards to mingle in and to benefit the Danish ranks. The accession of Frederick V. did not discourage these beginnings; and the luxury, and perhaps extravagance, of his reign, which was a reaction after the austerities of his father, had at least some sympathy with refinement and the arts. Agriculture and commerce at the same time advanced; and the long cessation of war, which was only broken for a moment by the threatening attitude of Peter III. of Russia, who aimed at revenging the injuries of his family in Sleswig, gave time for the seeds of progress in its various branches to bear and to mature their fruit.

After the accession of Christian VII. in 1766, the rise and fall of a favourite for a time disturbed the tranquillity of the kingdom. John Frederick Struensee, a doctor of Altona, was able to ingratiate himself with the young King, and became his minister. Innovations followed, beneficial generally, but not always prudent. The hostility of many was excited, and the fall and execution of the obnoxious minister followed. Christian was not a sovereign to rule alone. Degraded in mind and body, he was from the first unequal to the task, and his later years were spent in imbecility. Wise measures however were passed during the reign; and the name of Bernstorff, a minister who ruled under the Prince Regent, became famous. Serfdom was abolished in 1788; the slave trade in 1792; already the Jews were allowed to become members of any corporations; and Denmark in her liberal reforms had distanced many of the more powerful States of Europe.

A.D. The long peace, which had aided these developments,
 ——— and which had been so steadily preserved, was at
 1800 length brought to a close in the last year of the
 century, when the country found herself compelled
 to take a part in the great wars of Europe. The
 right to search all neutral vessels, which was asserted
 by England, had been a grievance which the Northern
 1780 Powers had resented as early as the American war, by
 the proclamation of the confederacy which became
 known as the Armed Neutrality, and which, now that
 the French shipping had been destroyed, and that
 their own carrying trade had been thereby increased,
 was felt to press more injuriously than ever upon
 them. The influence of France was naturally asserted
 to stimulate their indignation; Paul III., the Emperor
 of Russia, was the enemy of England; and under
 these influences the Maritime Confederacy was formed
 1800 which united Denmark and Sweden with France,
 Prussia, Russia, and Spain, in a league against the
 claims of England.

The first step had now been taken towards the
 wars that were to end so fatally for Denmark. The
 Maritime Confederacy did not endure six months, but
 during that time the kingdom suffered more seriously
 than any of its allies. An English fleet appeared
 1801 within the Sound, and the refusal of the Danes to
 allow its passage was interpreted to be a declaration
 of war. The English ships passed under the cannon
 of the Danish forts; they ranged themselves before
 Copenhagen; and after a desperate fight, which the
 valour of the Danes prolonged to their own loss, they
 compelled the submission of the town. "I have been

in a hundred and five engagements," said Nelson to the Crown Prince, "but that of Copenhagen has been the most terrible of them all." This battle, and the death of Paul III. of Russia, which removed the chief enemy of England, dissolved the Confederacy. But Denmark had not only lost her brave defenders at Copenhagen, she had also lost her West Indian colonies, which England, seizing upon the opportunity, had made her own.

Six years of a neutrality, which was comparatively uneventful, followed, and again the unhappy kingdom received a blow from England. The Peace of Tilsit 1807 had been signed, the empire of the world was to be divided between the monarchs of the east and west, and as a part of the imperial schemes the navies of all Europe were to be united against England. That Power, suspicious of the designs against her, appealed to Denmark to deliver up her fleet, lest France should seize it for her own ends; and, the pride of the nation resenting the demand, Copenhagen was again attacked, and was again forced to capitulate. The fleet which had been asked for was surrendered; but in her anger Denmark threw herself into the arms of France. She now exposed herself to the hostility of other enemies as well as of England. Sweden, still fighting against Napoleon, attacked Norway; and, though peace was made in 1809, the war was again renewed 1809 when the disastrous campaign of Moscow had encouraged Swedish hopes. Denmark, the one Power of Europe that continued to adhere to France, fell with her. In January, 1814, she was compelled to sign 1814 the Peace of Kiel, which surrendered all Norway to

A D. Sweden and the little island of Heligoland to England.
 — The Congress of Vienna indeed assigned to her the Duchy of Lauenburg, but even so her territory had been reduced one half, her finances were exhausted and she had sunk to be a third-rate power among the kingdoms of Europe.

Frederick VI., who had succeeded to his father in 1808, could only deplore and accept this fall. He then, like other sovereigns, turned to make the best of what remained to him. The peace, which now continued for more than thirty years, beheld the growth of constitutionalism in Denmark. The old assemblies of the four estates had long been obsolete. Provincial parliaments were now instituted to supply their place; and Sleswig, Holstein, Jutland, and the Isles, had each their separate elected legislative bodies, with the power of originating and discussing measures.

1839-48 Christian VIII. clung closely to the royal power, but even he is said to have meditated the grant of a free constitution to his subjects; and Frederick VII. in the
 1848 first year of his reign, achieved a popularity that was well deserved by the grant of what his father had withheld. Since 1660 the Kings of Denmark had been absolute; Frederick was now the first to be a constitutional King.

The spirit, however, which was spreading through
 1848 Europe, and making the year of Frederick's accession a revolutionary one, was not disarmed by his concessions. There was now kindled a spark, which, fanned by foreign enemies into a flame, brought new disasters to the already smitten monarchy. The cry had risen for a united Germany. In Holstein it had

found an echo. The people of the Duchy, inclined by race and sympathy to Germany, had been allowed under the tolerance of recent Kings to develop their predilections, and now aspired to nothing less than separation from Denmark. Under the leadership of the Duke of Augustenburg, the heir to whom the Duchy should pass upon the failure of the male line, which now seemed to be approaching, they urged the immediate recognition of their own independence, and their incorporation with Sleswig and Lauenburg, as provinces inseparable from themselves, into a sovereign State within the German Confederation. Holstein had the tradition of long connection with the Empire, and a similarity of laws, of race, and of language. Of the little Duchy of Lauenburg the same might be said. But Sleswig had never been brought into connection with the Empire; it lay beyond the Eider, the limit recognized of old as being the boundary of Imperial rule; it had been governed by separate rulers, under separate laws; its people and its language, except in the southern districts, where German immigration had occurred, were distinct; and, finally, its inhabitants were unwilling to revolt, or to have their destinies prescribed for them by the voice of their neighbours. The demand therefore for independence, unwarranted even in the case of Holstein and Lauenburg, whose possession had been indisputably assured to the Kings of Denmark, was still more unwarrantable on behalf of Sleswig. But right was now to be overlooked. It seemed expedient to German patriots to gain the Duchies for themselves; and they gave their sympathy

A.D. and their support to the separatists. An insurrection, which would otherwise have easily been suppressed, was thus made formidable. Prussia, with ill-omened zeal, gave even the assistance of her armies to the revolt-ers. King Frederick VII. found not only Sleswig but Jutland itself invaded; and though his fleet could destroy the commerce and blockade the ports of northern Germany, he was threatened with the loss of the whole Danish peninsula. His armies fought bravely, but it required the interference of foreign powers to save his provinces. The attitude of Russia, who declared herself protectress of Denmark, alone effected this. The King of Prussia, alarmed, desisted from the war; and, the insurrection being then easily suppressed, the King of Denmark re-entered upon possession of his Duchies. A conference in London in 1852 confirmed him in their possession; and the eventual succession to the whole of his dominions was settled upon Prince Christian of Sonderburg Glucksburg, renunciations of their rights having been previously obtained from all nearer claimants, including the Duke of Augustenburg.

But agitation still continued in Germany, and the grant of a new constitution by Frederick VII. in 1855, which gave a proportionate representation to all the provinces in one united assembly, became a pretext for the interference of the Germanic Confederation on behalf of the separate rights of the three Duchies. The death of Frederick VII. in 1863 brought forth a crisis. A son of that Duke of Augustenburg who had renounced all claim for himself and for his family came forward to challenge the right of Christian IX.,

who now according to the Treaty of London succeeded to the dominions of the late King. It was an age in which the sanctity of treaties appeared to be disregarded; and Prussia and Austria, though parties to the settlement which was now disputed, became, if they did not cause themselves to be made, the representatives of the German Diet, when it decreed a federal execution involving the occupation of the Duchies. The Danes resisted nobly. They fought with the courage which they had shown before, and which again gained for them the admiration of Europe. England and France, Russia and Sweden, powers that had joined in the guarantee for the integrity of the Danish dominions, looked idly on, and confined their sympathy to ineffectual remonstrances. Denmark protesting fell; but she fell with dignity. The Duchies were abandoned before a force that had been irresistible; and all Europe was loud in condemnation of the conquerors.

The policy of the two Powers, who now occupied the Duchies, was different. Prussia, inclining to absorb all Germany beneath her rule, was meditating annexation; while Austria, defending herself against the increase of her rival's power, preferred a scheme of confederation. In the divided administration of the Duchies, the differing policies brought on disputes. War followed, that divided Germany, and astonished Europe, in 1866; and when the Peace of 1866 Prague was made, after the battle of Sadowa, the Duchies, subject to a free vote of the inhabitants of North Sleswig concerning their fate, were found to be transferred entirely into the hands of Prussia. The

A.D.

Federal Diet, which might have pleaded for them, was now extinct; the claims of the Duke of Augustenburg, which had been once allowed consideration, were declared, and with good reason, to have been barred by the renunciation of his father; and Prussia ruled by the force of might over the Duchies which she had entered in the name of law. The advantages of the conquest, the importance of the seaboard and of the great harbour of Kiel to a united Germany, forbade the thought that any separate existence would ever be conceded. The inhabitants of North Sleswig alone looked forward with some hope to the execution of the article in their favour in the Peace of Prague; but the inaction of Austria, and the final annulling of the clause in 1878, defeated their expectations. And though many have thought that, for so small a territorial gain, it were a mistake to retain a disaffected population, the grasping hand of Prussia has been unwilling to release its hold; and time perhaps, and the gradual Germanisation of the district, has been expected to reconcile the country to its new rulers.

Denmark, which had been halved by the treaties of 1814, and which was halved again by the events of 1863, became one of the most diminutive kingdoms in Europe. Powerless to stand against the ambition of her neighbours, she is now threatened by the still growing might of Germany, which would doubtless be well pleased to obtain the possession of her harbours, and the command of her straits. Her own prudence, and the connections which her royal family have formed with the reigning houses of England and of Russia, are perhaps some safeguard; but her main

defence is undoubtedly the general hostility that would arise against any Power that attempted annexation. Copenhagen, by its position, is the Constantinople of the North, and the jealousies that still preserve the one may equally avail to defend the other.

A D.

II.

THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM.

THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM.

THE key to the history of the Netherland provinces has been their geographical position. They have lain upon the banks of mighty rivers, whose streams divided in the earliest times the Celtic from the German tribes; and they have retained till now the traces of this first and deepest division. They were morselled into petty States, whose boundaries, suggested by the hand of nature, were such as often to perpetuate existing differences. They stood upon the high road of commerce, at the confluence of these mighty rivers with a mighty ocean, and they received into their cities and their ports all the trade of Germany, of Italy, and of the East. They had to contend with an encroaching element, whose threatening storms were early teaching them to struggle and to endure. They were surrounded by ambitious neighbours; and they found that the one path that was left open to them was the sea. They have owed to the waves, not only their strength, but their wealth, their empire, and their fame: and the aid which natural advantages thus gave to them, enabled them, though small in extent and insignificant in population,

A.D.

A.D. to rise to a level with the Great Powers of Europe, and to win for themselves a fame, the remembrance of which can hardly die.

- 800 The briefest sketch of early history must suffice. United by the hand of Charlemagne, they fell asunder on his death. They became divided between the kingdoms of France, Lorraine, and Germany, whose boundaries followed the great rivers that ran through the provinces. Another century beheld the rise of the great houses of the feudal age. The Counts of
- 922 Holland gained their title from Charles the Simple in 922; the Dukes of Brabant, and the Earls of Flanders, are named later. A crowd of lesser barons and of prelates followed. The country was partitioned among countless lords, whose warlike tendencies too often found encouragement in their doubts as to allegiance and their remoteness from control. The provinces until the fifteenth century remain split up in petty fragments, of which the names of only a few become familiar. During this period the cities rose to power.
- 1217 Their charters, dating from the thirteenth century, and at first mere promises of the protection of the law, became the step to greater privileges. They soon acquired the right to share in their own government, and then in that of their whole province.
- 1400 By the fifteenth century they formed, together with the nobles, the parliamentary power of the country. Then came the period of Burgundian rule. By inheritance or purchase, by force or fraud, Duke
- 1437 Philip, who has been called the Good, became possessed of almost all the provinces. His rule, more powerful than that of petty counts or earls, restricted or ignored

A.D.

1477

1555

their privileges. His granddaughter, the Duchess Mary, took them, as her inheritance, by marriage into the House of Austria, and they became included by their first Imperial possessor in the Circles of the Empire. Maximilian, Philip, and Charles V., reigned in succession over them. When their rulers were weak, the provinces asserted their privileges; when they were strong, as was usually the case, they bent before them. The Emperor Charles V., by the purchase of Friesland, annexed the last outstanding fragment of independence; and the provinces, to the number of seventeen, were thus united under him. At his abdication in 1555, they passed to Philip II., who succeeded as hereditary Duke, or Count, or Lord, to the sovereignty in all of them.

They were provinces whose riches had already excited the admiration of Europe. The trade of Italy and Germany, of the Hanse Towns and of England, had met and filled their ports. The native industry of the population had added to the wealth obtained by foreign commerce; and the tapestries and woollen fabrics of the Netherlands were sought for and renowned throughout the habitable globe. Bruges, as early as the thirteenth century, had ranked with the most important cities of the world. Antwerp, as the overland trade to Venice and the East declined, had succeeded to its prosperity. Ghent, in the days of Charles V., was larger than Paris. And of the whole taxation of that great monarch's wide dominions, the small but wealthy provinces of the Netherlands are said to have alone borne two-fifths.

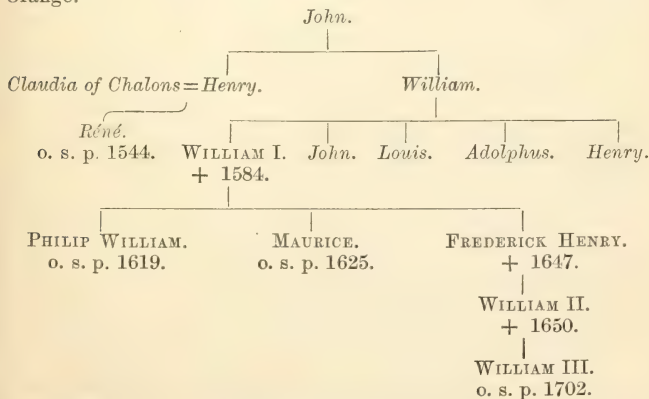
Philip II. therefore had every interest in the

A.D. — preservation of this part of his dominions. Like James II. of England, who is said to have thrown away three kingdoms for a Mass, he lost the brightest jewel in his crown through his bigoted enforcement of his religion. The Netherlands were loyal; they had even submitted under Charles V. to edicts of unexampled severity against the reformed religion; but they could not support the systematised persecution intended by his successor. That successor was unpopular, he was without the weight of empire at his back, and he was ruling a distant and isolated portion of his dominions. Yet he attempted more than the great Emperor, with all his power and popularity, had ever been able to enforce. The Edicts on religion, which had been but partial in their application, and which had often been allowed to slumber, were now revived, extended, and enforced. A scheme for the subdivision of the country into new dioceses, and for the appointment with each bishop of a staff of inquisitors, was carried out. At the same time the whole machinery of government was jealously retained in the hands of the adherents of Philip. The States General were not assembled; in the State Council, which was to direct affairs under the regency of Margaret of Parma, the members who might be unfavourable to the king's projects were excluded from all deliberations. The Cardinal Granvelle, an arrogant and unscrupulous minister, directed everything. Philip was aiming at being absolute, and was no longer satisfied with his hereditary rights. The presence of Spanish soldiers, whose violence was becoming intolerable, did not diminish apprehension.

Men felt that their ancient privileges were disregarded, that a tribunal of blood was being established in their midst, that the clerical estate, whose aggrandisement had been often resisted, was to rule over them, and that their liberties, and even their lives, were to be at the mercy of remorseless foreigners.

But Philip, who dwelt in Spain, had left behind him in the Provinces a man who was destined to make all his schemes fail. William of Orange Nassau, a prince of sovereign rank, a man of wisdom, wealth, and liberality, had been appointed Stadholder of Holland, of Zealand, and of Utrecht, and a member of the State Council.* His station had made it impossible

* The family of Nassau had early become divided. The elder branch, to which the Emperor Adolf had belonged, had remained in Germany: the younger had settled in the Netherlands. A member of the younger branch in 1515 had married Claudia of Chalons, sister of Prince Philibert of Orange. His son had succeeded to the principality, and dying without issue in 1544 had left it to William his first cousin, who had thus at the age of eleven become Prince of Orange.



The Stadholders were all commanders in chief in their provinces, and everywhere, except in Flanders, supreme judges in the civil and criminal tribunals.

A.D. that he should be overlooked, yet already he was
suspected of distrusting Philip. He had indeed cause
1559 to do so. As a hostage in France for the Peace of
Cateau Cambresis, he had learnt from Henry II., in an
unguarded moment, a plan for the extinction of the
reformed religion, which had been agreed upon with
Philip. He had been silent under the announcement,
and had thus earned a name which was to cling to
him through life; but he had at once endeavoured to
defeat the scheme. Though still a Catholic, he had
felt for the bitter fate that was impending over so
many of his countrymen. He had urged the States
to ask for the withdrawal of the Spanish troops, the
instruments, as he had learnt that they were intended
to be, of tyranny; and he now was watching jealously
the movements of the King, whose designs had been
so unexpectedly revealed to him.

The persecutions of the Inquisition became intolerable. Torture and death were now brought into the midst of a naturally humane and gentle population. Nobles, as well as people, began to show their dissatisfaction. Confederacies were formed; remonstrances were presented. The wit of one party pro-
1566 claimed the remonstrants as Beggars; the wit of the
other accepted the designation, which thenceforward
became famous. The under current of religious zeal,
which had been long repressed, at length burst forth.
In spite of the terrors of the Inquisition, the preachers
of the reformed religion came forth with boldness.
The fields were filled with multitudes who came
eagerly to listen to their exhortations. An outbreak
of fanatical fury followed. In many of the cities the

sacred buildings, the images, the treasures, which art and piety had accumulated, were defaced and destroyed. The Regent was powerless before the storm which had thus suddenly been aroused. There was no hope for tranquillity but in concession; and for a moment the Netherlands believed that their aspirations were about to be granted.

A.D.

Never had been a more entire mistake. The tyrant had been roused to fury, not submission. Already Philip had listened to the counsels of the Duke of Alva, who had urged a policy of extermination in the provinces, and his hand was now to inflict the punishment which the Duchess of Parma's government was thought incapable of carrying out. A period of six years succeeds during which all law and justice was suspended, while the furies of hell appeared to have been let loose upon the devoted Netherlands. The feeble remonstrances of the princes and even of the head of the Empire, who urged that the Netherlands, as sharers in the Peace of Passau, had become entitled to religious liberty, were disregarded. The whole population, in one decree of the Inquisition, was condemned to death. There was not an individual therefore who was not now at the mercy of his rulers. The Counts of Egmont and Horn, men of the noblest rank, most guiltless of rebellion, were seized and executed. Of the humbler classes many thousands perished. The Spanish garrisons that had been imposed on every town made resistance impossible; and the Provinces were trodden under foot. Even those whose zeal for the Catholic religion might have made them bear with Alva were alienated by the taxes

A.D. — which he imposed. All commerce stagnated; and even Philip himself began to perceive that his viceroy might not be infallible.

Meanwhile the Prince of Orange had left the country. He had long known the tendency of Philip's measures; his spies within the royal palace had continued to reveal to him the King's most secret intentions; and he knew that there was no chance of altering them. He had recognized that there was no safety for himself in the Provinces, that the man who was not with Philip would be deemed against him; and by withdrawing prudently to Germany he had escaped the fate before which his friends had fallen. The seizure of his son, a boy who had been left to study at the college of Louvain, was a new blow to his loyalty. He now determined to deliver the Provinces from the tyrant who ruled in them. He would not rebel against Philip: but as a sovereign prince he would raise forces; he would attack the viceroy who was ruining the interests both of king and people; he would recover the ancient liberties of his country, and let his sovereign rule in righteousness. In the Protestantism of the Empire, in the hatred of France against Spain, he would find support. From Germany, fertile in mercenaries, he might obtain armies. His own resources to the last penny should be expended in the cause: the contributions of every individual, who had the interests of freedom and of the religion at heart, should be eagerly sought.

1568 The year 1568 saw the commencement of hostilities. There was then opened a struggle of which no man living was to see the end, a contest of eighty years'

duration which was not terminated till the Peace of Westphalia. The first beginning, however, was unsuccessful. Four armies invaded the country. Two were defeated on the frontier. One, under Count Louis of Nassau, the brother of the Prince of Orange, after achieving a merely temporary success, was finally routed in Friesland. The fourth, under Orange himself, was baffled by the strategy of Alva, and melted away, as the gold which might have retained it failed, before achieving anything of importance. Disappointed, but not disheartened, the brothers of the House of Nassau retired for a time from the struggle to which as yet they were unequal. They joined the armies of the Huguenots in France; and won honour on a foreign soil, while waiting for the opportunity which was denied to them on their own.

In 1572 an event occurred which re-aroused their 1572 energies. Wild sailors, to whom the Prince of Orange had given his commission to prey upon the Spaniards, and whose exploits had already made them known as the Beggars of the Sea, arrived outside the town of Brill. Their wants had made them ask for food; their leaders' policy now made them conquerors. The town of Brill was seized and guarded. The first conquest from the Spaniards was thus won: the first stone, as it proved, in the edifice of independence was thus laid.

From Brill a thrill of patriotism spread. The town of Flushing drove out its Spanish garrison. Simultaneously almost, the provinces of Holland and of Zealand rose, and proclaimed their obedience to the Prince of Orange. Gelderland, Friesland, Overijssel, and Utrecht followed. The rapidity of the rising was

A.D. marvellous. At the same time, Count Louis of Nassau with an army seized the town of Mons, the key to the southern provinces of Brabant and Flanders. The news was as a thunderbolt to Alva. He was able indeed to recover Mons, and the greater portion of the insurgent Provinces submitted to him almost as speedily as they had risen. But Holland and Zeeland still defied his power; the cruelties which were inflicted upon the towns that were reduced seemed only to nerve their resistance; and the foundation of liberty which had now been laid in the north was not destined ever to be uprooted.

1572 The siege of Haarlem, which lasted seven months, is a memorable incident in this early period of the war. The Spaniards were there first taught what the heroism of the Netherlanders could endure; and though the city fell, its fall was purchased at a price that dismayed the conquerors. The siege of Alkmaar, the next city to be attacked, was abandoned before the floods which the desperation of the Hollanders was preparing to bring upon the country. Alva perceived himself that his triumphs would not be uninterrupted; he knew that he was hated in the Provinces, and mistrusted in Spain where the severity of his policy had been criticised and his financial measures ridiculed; and he now gladly surrendered the task of reducing
1573 the Provinces to a successor. Don Luis of Requesens, Grand Commander of Castile, continued his work; a paler but not less strenuous embodiment of tyranny. The Provinces held out with courage. The town of Middelburg was taken by the patriots. Leyden endured a siege as terrible but more successful in its

resistance than that of Haarlem. The ocean, brought to its gates by the rupture of the dykes, defeated the besiegers. Spoilt land is better than lost land, said the brave Hollanders. They had to mourn, however, the death of Count Louis of Nassau, who fell in battle as he was advancing to their relief.

Still, in spite of the constancy which was displayed, affairs began to darken. Holland and Zealand had no resources which could enable them to compete with Spain, and men and money were alike failing them. Their only hope appeared to lie in the protection of strangers. Elizabeth of England, and the Duke of Alençon, a brother of Henry III. of France, were successively invited to assume the sovereignty, which could no longer, even in name, belong to Philip. But the fear of Spanish complications, and the presence of domestic discord, prevented either from accepting the burden. As hope grew fainter, the last vision of despair began to arise. Beyond the seas there might be found a home to which tyranny could not extend; and while their provinces should be restored to the waves from which they had been won, the Netherlanders might sail in search of freedom to some far-distant shore.

The supreme necessity however did not arise. Events occurred, which never could have been foreseen, and which immensely aided the development of independence. The Grand Commander died. He had 1576 no appointed successor; and the government of the Provinces now passed to the State Council. The Spanish soldiery soon seized the opportunity to mutiny for the arrears of pay which the impoverish-

A.D. ment of Requesens had never allowed him to discharge. Their threatening conduct increased the hatred with which their presence had ever been regarded. There was now the bond of a common fear and hatred between the seventeen Provinces. The Prince of Orange seized the opportunity: he fanned the spirit of resistance. Under his influence the obedient Provinces forgot the fears which his conversion to the Calvinistic faith and the predominance of the reformed religion in Holland and in Zealand had until now inspired. Their Assemblies met. The State Council, powerless and derided, sank into insignificance. The congress of the Provincial States was summoned. While this was still impending, the army which was in possession of the citadel of Antwerp, burst forth upon the town, and by a massacre and plunder, which has received the name of the Spanish Fury, sent a shudder throughout Europe, and quickened the deliberations of 1576 the Provinces to a result. The Pacification of Ghent was signed. The fifteen Provinces agreed to unite with Orange and the States of Holland and Zealand: all edicts against heresy were to be suspended; all prisoners and confiscations were to be restored; the Inquisition was abolished; and all were to unite for the expulsion of the Spanish soldiery.

The country was thus united. It had now to preserve its union. The administration, however, of 1576-78 Don John of Austria, who arrived to fill the place of Requesens, and the early efforts of Alexander Prince of Parma, who soon succeeded to his brilliant relative, were destined to dissolve it. Don John was powerless on his arrival. He saw the States combining again

together in the Union of Brussels, a step which was intended to secure the execution of their earlier Pacification. He could but temporise; and he promised what was never meant and what was never expected to be performed. The viceroy of Philip, a sovereign who had always sought an absolute supremacy both for himself and for his religion, was becoming degraded into a constitutional lieutenant and a tolerator of heresy. His own impatience and his vanity revolted from such a position; he began to scheme for the obtaining of the power which was withheld from him. By surprise, he made himself the master of the citadels of Namur and Antwerp. The breach between himself and the United Provinces was widening; and hostilities were soon to be openly proclaimed.

The Prince of Orange had laboured to maintain what Don John was eager for dissolving. He had at last been able to induce the Queen of England to lend a sum of money and the assistance of 6000 men to his cause; but he had to contend with the jealousy of the Flemish nobles and with the prejudices of differing religions. The Archduke Matthias, a brother of the Emperor Rodolf, was invited by a party to assume the lead in the Provinces; and the danger of this act, which might have still further divided an already hesitating people, was only averted by the unselfishness of Orange, who in professing his readiness to serve as the Archduke's lieutenant became in reality his master. The religious differences were to prove more fatal. The arrogance of the Catholics, the fanatical violence of the Protestants, were increasing; and all

A.D.

1577

A.D. the exhortations to mutual tolerance and reconciliation
became unfruitful.

Don John was able by a victory at Gemblours to sustain the military reputation of his name; but his
1578 early death left the continuance of the war to a successor. The Prince of Parma, the son of the Duchess Margaret, who had before been Regent, took up the task. His tact and judgment, his knowledge, not only of war but of men, were to be disastrous to the Netherlanders. Won over by his arts, the Walloon Provinces, in which religious bigotry had sown division,
1579 concluded a separate peace with Spain. The Union formed at Ghent was thus broken; and even the Prince of Orange himself now lost the hope of including all the Provinces in a single confederacy. The abandonment however of the common cause by some of the confederates proved only a motive for the drawing closer together of others. The Union of Utrecht, which was signed in 1579, was hastened, if not caused, by the Walloon secession. The provinces and cities of the north agreed to bind themselves thenceforward to united action in all affairs of peace and war, while they determined to retain intact their separate constitutions and privileges. This Union, originally intended to embrace as many as would join in it, became confined to the seven Provinces of Holland, Zealand, Friesland, Groningen, Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel. These provinces adhered through good and evil to their compact. They formed a confederacy which was not destined to be broken or to yield. Their strength and perseverance became sufficient to curb the power of Spain; and they

emerged, after a struggle of seventy years, more closely united than before, in the independence of a free and victorious Republic.*

The abjuration of Philip by the States of the non-reconciled as well as of the newly united Provinces soon followed. The step, long hesitated over, was at last taken; and the country was without a head. 1581
Accustomed to the idea of sovereignty, not yet disposed to claim for themselves a wider liberty than that of being ruled according to their ancient charters, the States looked round to find a chief. The unselfishness of Orange alone excluded him from such a post. The voices of his countrymen united to declare him worthy of it. He believed however that it was more important to conciliate foreign sovereigns than to raise up for himself a throne; and though the States of Holland and Zealand, which had long since by successive decrees invested him with almost absolute authority, affectionately refused to accept another ruler, he was able to persuade the other States to engage in negotiations with the Duke of Anjou, brother of Henry III. The Archduke Matthias had been a cypher; England, whose Queen was already

* The relative importance of these Provinces may be shown by the amount of their contributions to the general expenditure.

Holland contributed $55\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Zealand „ $13\frac{1}{2}$ „

Friesland „ $11\frac{1}{2}$ „

Groningen „ $6\frac{1}{2}$ „

Utrecht „ $5\frac{3}{4}$ „

Gelderland „ $4\frac{1}{2}$ „

Overyssel „ $2\frac{3}{4}$ „

100	Motley, United Netherlands, iv. 524.
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A.D. dallying in love passages with the French Duke, would not oppose the arrangement; and the goodwill of France, a country from its power and situation most important to the Netherlands, would presumably be secured.

1582 The Duke of Anjou arrived to be styled the Defender of the Liberties of the Provinces. He proved their oppressor. Unsatisfied, as any Spanish governor might have been, with a limited authority, he aimed at making himself master in the land. His officers attempted to surprise the towns in which they were; he himself appeared to seek to rival the Spanish Fury in an assault on Antwerp. Exposed, defeated, driven from the country, he was the mark, and a legitimate one, for contempt and abhorrence. Yet still the danger of provoking France outweighed the consideration of his offences. The self-denial of Orange, and of the States under his counsels, might have preserved to him authority even in the country which he had betrayed, had not his death removed him from the
1584 scene. Simultaneously almost, the death of Orange himself occurred, and the country was left without head or hand to guide it.

A decree in consonance with Philip's character had been issued in 1580. By this, the King of Spain had offered gold and honours to any murderer of Orange. Attempts upon the life of the Prince had already been made; and one at length became effectual. In his own house at Delft, surprised by an assassin concealed upon the stairs, the Prince of Orange fell. His eulogy need not be written here. In the mourning of a whole people, in the rejoicings of his enemies, it had its

completest expression. His monument is to be found in the lasting fame and freedom of a grateful country.

For a time the cause of independence was thus endangered. The Provinces had lost the central figure of their history, the supporting pillar of their hopes. The sons of their great leader could not supply his place. The eldest, Philip William, had been for years a prisoner in Spain; the second, Maurice, was but nineteen, and the sapling had not yet become a tree.* An executive council indeed was formed, of which young Maurice was nominally the head; but this assemblage of many members could not replace the wisdom and the energy of the one whom all had to deplore. Meanwhile the Prince of Parma, a general unequalled for his skill, was pressing on them. Within two years after the death of Orange all Flanders and Brabant had been subdued. The great city of Antwerp, after a twelvemonth's siege, which had exhausted all the ingenuity both of assailants and defenders, had fallen; and all men could see that the 1585 States were now indeed without a head.

Yet was the cause of freedom not abandoned. Persistently the States appealed to foreign princes. They offered their sovereignty to Henry III. of France, the brother of the Duke of Anjou, and deluded and disappointed by his hesitation and refusal they turned again to Elizabeth of England. The great Queen, still cautious and frugal as before, refused to be their lord. She had recognized however that their cause, in its hostility to Spain, and in its defence of the reformed religion, was her own; and she allowed the Earl of

* His motto "Tandem fit surculus arbor."

A.D. Leicester and 6000 men to sail for the Provinces. The
1586 States received assistance, but they received a leader whose likeness bore too painful a resemblance to that of Anjou. The vanity and ambition of the great Earl, the favourite of his Queen, made him greedy of power; disputes arose as to the extent of his authority; his followers betrayed their trusts, and made their master suspected; the burgher party within the towns began slowly to believe that they might as well govern for themselves; and after quarrels and recriminations the English Earl gave up his post.

1589 The close of Leicester's administration is the final abandonment of the search for foreign leaders. There were still men within the Provinces themselves, who could guide them with a purer spirit, and with not less courage, to independence. The Advocate of Holland, John of Olden Barneveld, was a diplomatist whose experience and whose sagacity had obtained for him the admiration of his contemporaries; the young Count Maurice of Nassau, already Stadholder of Holland and of Zealand, and soon to succeed to the same dignity in Utrecht, Gelderland, and Overijssel, had been fitting himself by study and by application to be the opponent of Parma in the field, and was now about to prove himself the greatest strategist that his age had seen. The Stadholder of Friesland, Lewis William of Orange Nassau, was a commander little inferior to his cousin. Other members of the same family were worthily sustaining the honour of their name; and patriots in every rank of life were not wanting. These men did not refuse the aid of foreign Powers; they continued the alliance with England,

and such assistance as Elizabeth still sent was gratefully repaid by the conduct of the Dutch navy in 1588, when it blockaded the Prince of Parma, and prevented his joining the Armada, as it lay in the Straits of Dover impending over England. But they determined that the part of foreigners should now be a subsidiary one; they might be the allies, but not the leaders, in the war; they might defend, but they should never rule, the Dutch Provinces.

The circumstances of the time began to aid the Netherlanders. Encouraged by the civil wars of which France had become the scene, King Philip of Spain was aiming at the conquest of that kingdom, as well as at the subjugation of the Provinces. The Prince of Parma, his most famous general, was summoned to leave the plains of Flanders, in order to share in struggles whose scenes lay round the gates of 1590 Paris and Rouen. The result was a turn in the history of the Netherlanders. They profited by the absence of their most formidable foe, and by the weakness of the Spanish armies now drained for his support. Zutphen, Deventer, and Nymegen were 1591 successively reduced. The successes of the great Spaniard were being emulated by the rising genius of Count Maurice; and from this time the fortunes of the Provinces, which had so often fluctuated, continued steadily to rise.

The Prince of Parma returned from France with shattered health, and with resources crippled by the parsimony of Philip. He found the tide of victory had set against him. He could not roll it back; and he died in 1592, having seen many of his own 1592

A.D. conquests retaken by his young rival. The Spanish
Governors who succeeded to him were men of little
power, whose brief authority remained unmarked by
1593 any triumphs. The important cities of Gertruyden-
1594 berg and Groningen became the prizes of Count
Maurice. The skill of the young commander was now
generally recognized ; and, from all countries, men were
flocking to his camp, to become students in the art of
scientific warfare, of which his sieges were giving the
first lessons.

Philip himself was weary of the long-protracted
strife, and began to think how he might honourably
end it. A scheme arose before his mind to which he
1598 proceeded to give operation. He transferred to his
daughter Isabella, and to her husband, the Archduke
Albert of Austria, the conjoint sovereignty of the
Netherlands. The country was nominally made
independent of the crown of Spain ; and, while Philip
hoped that the disobedient Provinces might thus be
allured to reconciliation with the new Sovereigns, he
calculated upon the probable childlessness of Isabella,
or at least upon the limitations that he imposed upon
the possible marriages of her descendants, to secure the
eventual reversion of all to Spain. The States,
however, were too wary to be deceived, and they
had enjoyed their independence too long to make them
wish to pass under the dominion of any master. The
Archdukes, as the new sovereigns became called, ruled
over the obedient Provinces alone, which for a time
were thus raised to the dignity of an independent
State ; but they enjoyed no advantage over former
Governors in the other Provinces ; the antagonism

remained unchanged ; and the war continued in spirit and in character the same. A.D.

The successes of the Netherlanders continued. In 1597 an engagement at Turnhout had given the first triumph over the Spanish forces in the field, and had had an effect that was electric throughout the United Provinces. New sieges were now undertaken, new towns were won. In the confidence of success an attempt on Nieuport, in the heart of Flanders, was determined on ; and the design, which prudence should have condemned, became the source of a new triumph for the Dutch arms. From a position that seemed hopeless, surrounded by enemies, Count Maurice snatched a victory that gave more glory to his name 1600 than any earlier or later triumph that he ever achieved. The power of Spain received so great a blow that all Europe began to view with altered feelings the struggle of the Netherlanders, and began to honour in proportion their victorious chief.

The pride of Spain was now humbled. Town after town had been lost ; the obedient Provinces had been ravaged ; and the necessities of taxation had exhausted them. Nor was it only in the Netherlands that the Spaniards had suffered. Dutch fleets had risen up against them on the seas ; they had sailed to every quarter of the globe ; they were found upon the coasts of Spain ; they were found in the Indies of the East and West. A commercial empire of the Dutch was now beginning to supplant that of the Spaniards and the Portuguese. The independent enterprise of individuals had received new strength by the amalgamation of all private interests in one great

A.D. — Company, which fought and traded in the distant waters of the Asiatic seas. At the same time the rich cargoes from the Western Hemisphere had become the spoil of privateers who emulated by their deeds the achievements of the great Company of the East. From a local and restricted field the war had spread, until it had covered the whole globe; and Spain, attacked in every quarter, had realized the necessity of peace.

It had not realized, however, the need of concession. Intolerant, exclusive, as before, the country still was claiming a monopoly for her religion and her trade. Philip II. had died in 1598, but his death had made no change of policy, and the war continued as before.

1601 The operations of the years from 1601 to 1604 are concentrated in the siege of Ostend, the last remaining stronghold of independence in Flanders, the coveted and tardily acquired conquest of the enemies of the States. The fame of its success belongs to the great banker Spinola, a Genoese, whose wealth caused the acceptance of his services, and whose talents soon raised him to a height among the military commanders
1604 of the time. But while Ostend was falling, the States had won the town of Sluys; and their gains, as they believed, were more than compensation for their losses. Spain still confessed her weakness by her readiness to treat. Peace still was more and more craved for. The war was languishing; and attempts at negotiation were begun, were broken off, and were renewed. While Spain was scheming for her own advantages, the Dutch adhered most firmly to their demands of independence for themselves, for their trade, and for

their faith. There was even a party, with Prince Maurice at its head, who deemed that nothing short of the unequivocal abandonment of every claim could justify the cessation of war. But the views of politicians prevailed; and at length, after a continuous struggle of forty years, after the exhaustion of all the tricks and artifices of diplomacy, the repose which had been sought for was obtained, and a Truce was 1609 concluded for twelve years which suspended the continuance of all hostilities.

The United Provinces now stood before Europe with their independence, if not textually, yet virtually, acknowledged. They had been treated with "as free Provinces;" and only the Spanish ministers could recognize the amount of subjection which such an expression had implied. They had been accorded free traffic with all princes who might permit the same; and the India trade had been thereby tacitly acknowledged. The long-controverted subject of religion had not been mentioned; and they were left free therefore to follow their own faith. On every point they appeared to have secured their aim. Foreign nations recognized their triumph, and for the first time their ambassadors were generally admitted to the different courts.

The wealth of the Republic, in spite of war, had grown amazingly. The first vessels had set sail for the Indies in 1583; in 1595 the rich island of Java had been occupied; and since then Ceylon, the Moluccas, China, and even Japan, had been colonized. Trade had flowed abundantly into the Dutch ports. It had passed by Antwerp, now a Spanish town, with

A.D. — its prosperity decayed and its access to the sea cut off by the Dutch cities that stood lower on the Scheldt, and it had filled the warehouses and the canals of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. Three thousand vessels, and a hundred thousand sailors, were now engaged upon the seas. The population of the great cities was increasing rapidly; and among all this population there are said to have been none idle and none poor.

Peace alone appeared to be required to foster a development such as Europe had hardly seen; and during the ensuing years the progress of the States in wealth and population remained unchecked. Had harmony controlled their councils the progress in internal strength must have been great. It is melancholy, however, to have now to record the rise of domestic factions, the strife of politicians and the strife of sects, whose intermingling bitterness produced results deplorable and fatal to the state.

Conflicting factions group themselves around two individuals. Prince Maurice, the soldier, whose occupation, whose power, and whose hopes, all centred in war, had been among the opponents of the truce. The Advocate of Holland, John of Barneveld, had desired its conclusion. And while the counsels of the Stadholder had been disregarded those of the Advocate had had their triumph in the success of the negotiations. Opposition had thus been engendered between the partisans of the military and the civil power, between the great leaders of the war and of the peace party. Some traces of such opposition may perhaps be found in earlier conflicts. It was

now, however, that it became distinctly marked. The religious controversies which had begun to divide men, the questions of predestination and freewill, the strife between the believers in the stern severity of Calvinism, which had been preached by Gomarus, and the followers of the milder and more tolerant doctrines of Arminius, his opponent, were caught up by the contending parties, and inflamed the zeal which issued forth in hate. On the one side was Prince Maurice, the representative of the army, of the aristocracy, of despotism, and of the Gomarists, whose stern religion had most commended itself to his arbitrary and uncompromising nature; on the other was Barneveld, the representative of law, of constitutionalism, of the burghers, and of the Arminians, whose gentler creed had more accorded with the peaceful spirit of the municipalities. It remained to be seen whether the sword of the Stadholder, or the imposing authority of the Advocate, would have weight sufficient to turn the scale.

Accusations were freely levied between the contending parties. The Advocate and his supporters were said to have become pensionaries of Spain. A General Synod was demanded by Prince Maurice and the Gomarists for the condemnation of Arminianism. The Advocate replied that by the Act of Union the independence of each Province had been guaranteed, and that Provincial Synods alone could be binding. He urged the Provinces to defend their privileges, and even to enlist soldiers for their support. The advice was made a matter of the gravest accusation. Prince Maurice began a progress through the

A.D. municipalities, and regardless of all forms dissolved
1618 such as opposed him. "It must be so now," was his
only answer to those who urged the illegality of his
actions. And when he had secured for himself a
majority in the States General, the Synod he desired
was held, and Barneveld, as a traitor to the authority
of the Stadholder and to the peace of the country,
was arrested.

It does not concern us to do more than mention the
condemnation that was passed upon Arminianism.
The fate of the great statesman is of an importance
far beyond the record of a mere sectarian triumph
which may well deserve to be forgotten. The
Advocate of Holland, upon whom not merely all his
countrymen but foreign sovereigns had leaned, who
had given a life of more than seventy years to
combating the power of Spain, to building up by every
measure, whether of war or peace, the fortunes of his
country, was now submitted to the indignity of
interrogatories by men avowedly his enemies and
predetermined to secure his fall. The end astonished
1619 and distressed Europe. A sentence was prepared
adjudging him to die: the executioner fulfilled his
office: and a stain has since rested upon the people
who did not save, and upon the Prince who saw
condemned, one of the most illustrious representatives
of patriotism and of statesmanship whom that age or
any other has yet produced.

1621 Two years after the death of Barneveld the Truce
expired. The States had lost their ablest counsellor;
they had lost many of their subjects, whom religious
intolerance had driven into exile; they knew that the

authority of Prince Maurice had been impaired by the arbitrary acts which had raised up enemies against him, and that his energies were being blunted by advancing age. They might look with apprehension therefore to the renewal of the war. Belgium, on the other hand, as the southern Provinces now began to be called, had enjoyed comparative prosperity under a wise administration. Its sovereignty was now reverting to the crown of Spain; for the death of the Archduke Albert in 1621 left Isabella without throne or child, and she remained as Regent only in the country where she had reigned. The circumstance, however, could only add to the desire of Spain for the prosecution of the war. The genius of Spinola was still at hand to command success, and the Spaniards looked forward with hopefulness to the recovery of their lost authority.

Meanwhile the struggle for independence and for the reformed religion, which was about to be renewed, had spread to Germany. The great war of Thirty Years had begun. Already the United Provinces, by supporting the claim of the Elector of Brandenburg to the duchies of Cleves and Juliers, and by subsidies to the Protestant princes, had ranged themselves in opposition to Spain and to the Emperor; and the war in the Netherlands, in addition to its local interest, has now also that of being as it were the side plot to the great drama that was engaging Europe.

The contest proved obstinate as before. The remaining years of Prince Maurice's life brought no great triumphs to his country; and the loss of Breda

A.D. in 1625 was a disastrous blow. But the administration
1625 of Frederick Henry, who succeeded to the titles of his
brother in the same year, was to prove a glorious one.
His name already had become famous; and his calm
judgment, and his skill in the conduct of the war,
have ranked him not unequally with the great princes
who had preceded him. To the despotic policy of
Maurice succeeded milder measures: religious zeal
was tempered; confidence became restored. The Pro-
vinces now entered upon happier times. Success
attended them by land and sea. Their navy, long
since a terror to the power of Spain, had now new
triumphs; and the riches of Peru were brought as
spoil into the treasury of Amsterdam. By land their
armies were victorious. The town of Bois le Duc was
1629 taken in 1629, after a siege which had been honoured
by the interest of Europe and the actual presence of
many of her princes. The taking of Venlo, of Roer-
mond, and of Maastricht, followed: while, as if to
second the efforts of the Republic, its most formidable
enemy, the Marquis Spinola, was recalled by a too
jealous government. The Belgic Provinces, exposed
and ravaged, were gradually reduced to destitution;
money was now so scarce in them that even the
1633 Regent Isabella, who died in 1633, was buried privately,
through the absence of funds sufficient to provide
for the funeral she had desired; and the victories of
the United Provinces began to lead the southern
States to consider if it were not possible to become
the allies instead of the enemies of such powerful
neighbours.

Another influence, however, in addition to that of

Spain, was now at work to prevent a union. France, guided by the master mind of Richelieu, and prepared to profit by the weakness of the Spaniards and by the war which had absorbed the whole attention and the energies of Germany, beheld, as she thought, her opportunity. The Spanish Netherlands, while still distinct from the United Provinces, might be partitioned for her own gain: when once incorporated with them they would acquire a strength which might defy the schemes of her ambition. The issue therefore was not union within the Netherlands themselves, but it was union between the United Provinces and France. The States at length received the offer of the aid of the French monarchy in their contest against Spain. They did not yet perceive that the strength of their new friend might prove as formidable to them as that of their adversary, and the alliance was formally concluded in 1635.

The course of events did not at first respond to expectations. A few successes were obtained, but were soon followed by discord and recriminations. The seasons proved unfavourable; the Spanish Governors showed vigour, and both French and Netherlanders experienced defeat. But while the Dutch troops had been compelled to abandon their conquests, their navy, under the rising star of Tromp and of De Witt, had destroyed the Spanish fleet in a memorable victory off the English Downs; and soon the dreaded Spanish infantry were crushed under the arms of Condé at Rocroy. Unfruitful as the alliance had at first seemed, its effects were now to become manifest. The French armies advanced, and Gravelines, Courtrai, and

A.D.
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1635

1639

1643

A.D. — Dunkirk fell before them. The position of the United Provinces became changed. They saw that the great task of eighty years had been at length accomplished, that they need fear no longer the power of Spain. Their policy in consequence became changed also. In their struggle for existence they had made war continuously against Philip II. and his successors ; in their security they now held out the olive branch, lest by excess of zeal they should but clear the way for a more formidable enemy. It is from these times and these successes that sprang the first idea of a barrier against France. That power under the guidance of Richelieu, and swelled by the victories of Condé and Turenne, seemed now about to become as formidable to the hard-won liberties of the States as that of Spain had ever been. To divide the Spanish provinces with Louis XIV. was to bring the conqueror to their own doors ; and, the fear of the future outweighing the remembrance of the past, the States turned to become the protecting allies of a foe whom in her strength they would remorselessly have dismembered.

1647 The special treaty of Munster in 1647, between the United Provinces and Spain, and the general Peace of
1648 Westphalia which followed in 1648, become an epoch on more than one ground in Netherland history. It is the end of the long strife for independence, and the definite and final acknowledgment of all that the Republic had claimed. She was now recognized by Europe as a free and sovereign State. Her connection with Spain, which had been so fatal, her connection with the Empire, which had been so profitless, were alike terminated. Her trade was assured to her, by the

possession of her colonies in Asia, and by the closing of the Scheldt so as to preclude the rise of any rival to her ports. Her religion above all was to be respected. But the Peace did more than this. While it assured the liberties of the North it sealed finally the destinies of the South. If Spain relinquished all designs against the Republic, the Republic in her turn relinquished all designs against the Provinces of Spain. There was no claim, no thought of union with them now. France still continued to fight on for their possession, and for ten years, until the Peace of the Pyrenees, in 1659, maintained a doubtful struggle in 1659 them. But the United Provinces no longer aided or even sympathized with the attack. The fear of French ambition had risen and was still to rise; and for a century and a half that fear preserved the southern Provinces under the Hapsburg rule.*

For a brief space the Republic enjoyed a respite from war, and home politics become the leading feature

* It may be convenient to trace here the connection of the Netherlands with the Empire. The Emperor Maximilian had included them in 1512 in the Circle of Burgundy, and Charles V. had confirmed this; but the Provinces had been exempted from the jurisdiction of the Imperial tribunals. In 1568, at the solicitation of many princes of the Empire, the Emperor Maximilian II. had urged that the Netherlands, as being within the Empire, and as having been represented at the conferences which preceded the Peace of Passau, were entitled to religious liberty; but Philip, though admitting that they were within the Imperial Circles, denied that he was bound to observe the ordinances of the Imperial Diet; and, as Maximilian was anxious to secure the marriage of his daughter to the Spanish king, the matter was allowed to drop. In 1607, as the negotiations for the Truce were in progress, the Emperor Rodolf warned the States that they should conclude nothing without his knowledge; but they then replied that they had had no protection from the Empire, and they hinted that they did not intend to accept its burdens.

A.D. of the time. The Stadholder Frederick Henry had
1647 died in 1647. The confidence of his people had rewarded him by the nomination of his son, while still a child of three years old, to be his successor; and that son, by a marriage with the princess Mary, the daughter of Charles I. of England, had added to the growing consideration for his House. There were already parties, however, who viewed with jealousy the increase of its power. The administration of the family of Orange had appeared to have become synonymous with the maintenance of great armies and of war; and the character of the new Stadholder increased the dissatisfaction. William II. had the ambition and the rashness of youth: he became involved in contests with the States; and he allowed himself to be hurried into arbitrary acts, that resembled those by which Maurice had lost his popularity. His rule, which was closed by his death in 1650, at the early age of twenty-four, was prejudicial to the interests of his House. The heir to the name of Orange was a posthumous son, and the people had now an opportunity. In Zealand, faithful to its old attachments, an attempt was made to name the child successor to his father; but the design failed; and here, as elsewhere, the Provincial States assumed to themselves the functions which had been till now confided to a Stadholder. The result became the concentration of authority in the hands of the States General. In that assembly, the minor Provinces were led by Holland as the chief member, and Holland in her turn was led by her Grand Pensionary.

War soon again impended over the Republic. Its

earliest contests had been with Spain; its next were to be with England, a Power that until now had been not generously, but still continuously, a friend. England had passed under the rule of Cromwell. Eager for the increase of trade, jealous perhaps of the Dutch navy, the parliament had decreed the 1651 Navigation Act, forbidding the importation of all goods except in English vessels. The importance of such an Act to the Republic was at once apparent. The colonial empire which the Dutch had won from Spain had given into their hands a monopoly of the supply of Europe. Ten thousand ships, that were manned by 168,000 men, were now engaged in a trade which had become that of carriers to other countries, since it had long exceeded the requirements of their own. To exclude these vessels from the rich markets of England was to withdraw from them one of the chief causes and supports of their existence. The Republic was prepared at once to remonstrate, and eventually, if necessary, to fight.

The contest came, provoked by accidental circumstances, and without a formal declaration of war. Van Tromp, whose name had already been made illustrious against his Spanish foes, and De Ruyter, who had yet to become famous, were in command of the fleet of the Republic. The English Channel saw successive actions, in which the honour of both nations was maintained. The boast of Tromp, however, who, with a broom at his masthead, declared that he would sweep the seas of every foe, was not fulfilled; and the death of the great admiral, off Dunkirk, was not the least of the blows inflicted upon the Republic during

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A.D. the war. The might of England under the Commonwealth was greater than that of the States. They had
1654 to submit to the exclusion of their ships from England, and to the payment of money compensations; the spice island of Polerone was to be surrendered; and the Province of Holland declared the House of Orange, as the kinsmen of the Stuarts, incapable for ever of holding office.

1665 But the fortune of war was changed, when the fleets of England and of the Republic met again in 1665. During the interval the Dutch had added to their
1659 fame by the defence of Copenhagen against Charles X., whose ambition was threatening not only the independence of an ally but the security of their Baltic trade. England on the other hand had lost her great Protector; she was in the hands of a King who was weak, and of an administration that was incompetent. The recall of the Stuarts had been followed by the repeal on the part of Holland of the decree excluding the House of Orange from power; but it was not possible to preserve continued friendship. King Charles II., aspiring to win new colonies, and perhaps an influence, which might give the power still exercised by the States into the hand of his nephew, rushed into war. He speedily found out his error. Success indeed did not entirely fail him, and the English could again make boast of victories over the Dutch. But the triumphs of the Republic were greater than those of her enemies. The fleet of De Ruyter again sailed forth, and returned with no less than three and twenty of the English ships and with the news of a victory in which nine thousand English sailors had been

killed or taken. The necessities of England, then devastated by plague and fire, and the incapacity and corruption of her administrators, were depriving her of strength, and the war on her part was reduced to a defensive one. The ships of the Republic appeared even in the Thames; the inhabitants of Gravesend and of Sheerness beheld an advancing and an unresisted foe; and London, for the first and last time in its history, heard the roar of foreign guns. The States had triumphed; they were masters of the sea; they were masters also of peace or war; and England, compelled in turn to accept a peace at Breda, relinquished the island of Polerone, and modified her restrictions upon trade which Cromwell alone had been able to enforce. 1667

The campaigns of Maurice and of Frederick Henry, the victories of Tromp and of De Ruyter, had raised the Republic to a pinnacle of fame. They could not however ensure for her tranquillity. She was now threatened by the schemes of an ambitious neighbour more formidable than any enemy that she had yet had. In France the reign of Louis XIV. had begun. The mighty conqueror, that was to be, had revived the designs of Richelieu against the Spanish Netherlands; and the renewed proposal to divide them with the Republic had excited the apprehension not only of that power but of Europe. Soon the triumphant progress of the conqueror began. Within three months the Flemish towns, which as yet no fortifications defended, were in the hands of the French. Not Holland only, but England, and even Sweden, were afraid; and the Triple Alliance between 1668

A.D. the three Powers was the first instance of united action
 ——— against France. That action speedily brought forth
 1668 the Peace of Aix la Chapelle. For the time the King
 of France was checked; and though many of his
 conquests were retained, he found himself compelled
 henceforward to study to dissolve a coalition that had
 proved too formidable for him.

The Republic more particularly had excited his in-
 dignation. The negotiations with which his proposals
 had been met appeared to him duplicity; and not only
 the Spanish provinces, but the Republic itself, must
 now suffer. The Dutch saw their danger. Around
 them the princes of the Rhine were being gained. In
 England, Charles II., exposed to the agents and the
 bribes of Louis, had preferred to become the pensioner,
 and not the enemy, of the French King. From
 Sweden, whose distance made her less concerned, they
 could expect little. They stood alone against an
 1672 enemy that must outmaster them. Then came almost
 a repetition of the early scenes of their existence. In
 their peril they called upon the Prince of Orange, since
 his birth excluded from all power, to be their Captain
 General; in their unconquerable independence they
 even revived the project of transferring their homes and
 government beyond the seas; while, in their devotion to
 the country they still held, they hesitated not to drown
 it beneath the floods. The great conqueror was baffled.
 He had crossed the Rhine, a second Cæsar; he had
 occupied the provinces of Gelderland, Utrecht, and
 Overijssel; but his arrogant demands had been met by
 the self-sacrifice and by the courage of despair. The
 Prince of Orange was now Stadholder; the De Witts,

the leaders of the peace party, had in a popular tumult lost their lives. The voice of the country was for war. All sacrifices were preferable to that of liberty; and Amsterdam, now towering like her own spirit above the floods, preserved her independence from the invader.

There was aid also at hand. The dangerous ambi- 1672
tion of Louis, the negotiations of the new Stadholder, had prepared an alliance for the States with the Emperor, with Brandenburg, and with Spain. While his enemies were thus confederate against him the King of France was also losing his allies. The English had compelled their sovereign to make peace; and his example had been followed by the Bishop of Munster and the Elector of Cologne. The Republic, which so lately had seemed doomed, was saved. Her armies no longer fought alone against an overwhelming foe. William of Orange, at the head of the Dutch and Spanish troops, was able to advance from his own country which had been so lately threatened, and to transfer the devastations of war to the neighbourhood of the French frontier. The Dutch fleet again, whose operations, however glorious, had been confined through the hostility of England to the Channel, was now free to sail to other seas; and De Ruyter carried his vengeance and his fame to the Mediterranean, where French ships were aiding in the revolt of Sicily against Spain. The death of the great admiral, in the second of two combats, was a loss irreparable to his 1676
country; but the work for which he had lived was done. Triumphant in fifty fights, he had sustained the naval fame of his country in years the most

A.D. — perilous it was to know; and now that hostility to England was over, now that rivalry by sea between the two great powers was about to give place to an enduring alliance for conquests upon land, the place of the great admiral, in the forefront of his people, was not unworthily filled by the young Stadholder, whose talents had already won for him the admiration even of his foes.

William of Orange had found himself opposed in Flanders by the great Condé. He had attempted to dislodge his army, and had fought the indecisive battle of Senef against the great commander. "The Prince has behaved like an old soldier," wrote his adversary, "except in exposing his life like a young one"; and from this time Louis XIV. was aware that his opponent was not to be despised. Other enemies divided the attention of the French King; but the watchfulness of the young Prince assisted powerfully their efforts, and contributed much to the uneventful nature of the Flemish campaigns. A few towns became the prizes of Louis. To William, however, belonged the glory, not only of having preserved his own country from the war, but of having defended with skill the territory of his ally.

The Republic indeed was no longer the first object of the French arms. There were now nearer and less obstinate foes, whose entry on the strife had diverted the wrath of the French King. Spain, exhausted by a struggle that had been carried on in Flanders, on the Mediterranean, and beneath the Pyrenees, was paying by the cession of her Flemish towns the price of the 1678 war. The Peace of Nymegen, which was signed in

1678, was a ratification of many of the conquests of Louis XIV., but at the same time it rewarded the determined courage of the States by the recognition of their trade, and by the right, which was now accorded for the first time, of garrisoning certain of the Spanish towns as a barrier against the future encroachments of France. The provinces of Spain, diminished, and constrained to accept a foreign force, were bearing the burden of the war, while the Republic, which had been made the first pretext for it, was emerging with a renewed strength.

William III. of Orange, in addition to the prestige of a great name, had a wisdom far beyond his years. He had found his country exposed to the ambition of a powerful and aggressive neighbour, and prudently and indefatigably he had striven from the first to make provision for the danger. The Peace of Nymegen hardly had been signed before he was at work upon a new coalition, which should frustrate the designs of Louis XIV. His efforts, difficult and long sustained, were at length rewarded by a treaty at Augsburg, 1686 which bound all the princes of the Empire, including the sovereigns of Sweden and of Spain, to resist conjointly any attack upon their several dominions. James II. of England, like Charles, the obedient vassal of France, protested against such a league; but already there were not wanting indications that the voice of his people might differ from that of their King, and a new tie with the English nation had been formed by 1678 the marriage of the Prince of Orange with the presumptive heiress of the English throne.

That marriage was to enable the Republic successfully

A.D.

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A.D. to confront the power of France, and to establish in
 ——— permanence the Barrier upon which it believed its
 existence to depend. While Louis was engaged upon
 the Upper Rhine, in the war which his annexations
 had provoked, the Revolution in England had occurred,
 and William, the nephew and the son-in-law of James
 1688 II., had landed to deliver his new country from a
 tyrant, and to add its strength to the efforts of his old.
 The weight of England, uncertain heretofore, was now
 to turn the scale. Her troops, her wealth, were all
 available against the sovereign who had sheltered and
 would now restore her banished King; and the States,
 although they murmured at the strict jealousy with
 which their Stadholder regarded the rights of his new
 kingdom, could not deny the glory and the advantages
 which the Union conferred upon them. Every strain
 indeed was now necessary, and faction was stilled
 beneath the impending danger. Those even, who
 would before have upheld the cause of France, had
 1685 been silenced by the revocation of the Edict which
 had tolerated their religion, and even were preparing
 with the rest to resist the oppressor.

The year that followed the accession of the Prince
 1690 of Orange to the English throne saw the ravage of the
 Palatinate, and all Europe ringing with an indignant
 outcry. One by one, the members of the Coalition
 declared war. The States did so in March, and were
 followed by England in April. William, if his atten-
 tion was divided, had now his resources doubled; and
 the princes of the Empire listened with respectful
 deference to propositions that were seconded by the
 united riches of two powerful countries. France,

however, in her interests and government was one, while her enemies were many; and Louis XIV., in the earlier campaigns, was able to reap advantages from the delays and divisions of the allies. The first year his forces defeated those of the Prince of Waldeck at Fleurus. In 1691 and 1692 he took the strong towns of Mons and of Namur, after sieges of sufficient length to gratify French vanity, while William was unable to bring his tardy followers into the field. The battles of Steinkirk and Neerwinden, the latter being the bloodiest that the century had seen, soon followed. William was defeated: but he of all men knew how to repair defeat; and the scenes of his misfortune became the sources of his fame. "Since the battle he has been a second Turenne," said Louis himself; and the French progress was still checked. Meanwhile, the united fleets of the Republic and of England had destroyed the ships of France in the glorious victory 1692 at La Hogue, and success had thus been balanced.

But the fortune of war was to change still further. William in his turn surprised the French; and unexpectedly sat down to retake Namur. To relieve it was impossible; and even the bombardment of Brussels could not draw the Royal Stadholder from the prize which he had determined to secure. The French troops, abandoning the North, attempted a last effort in its favour; but the city fell before their eyes. Henceforth, however, the war was uneventful. France and England were alike suffering from exhaustion; and proposals of peace were already being interchanged. The delays with which these were met prolonged the war; but in 1697 the Treaty of Ryswick was signed, 1697

A.D. — and by a general restoration of conquests the provisions of Nymegen were re-affirmed.

The wars in the Netherlands seemed over. Louis XIV. had appeared to recognize the futility of his designs. Much of the Spanish provinces had been restored; and even the principality of Orange, which had been seized by Louis, had been given back to the House of Nassau. But an event occurred which opened again a way for French ambition, and rallied again upon the fields of Flanders the armies which were to oppose it. Charles II., the last Austrian
1700 king of Spain, had died in 1700, and had bequeathed the vast inheritance of his dominions to a great-grandson of Louis XIV. Europe could not allow one family to wield so vast a power; but while she debated upon the alliance by which her protest was to be enforced, the King of France had entered the Spanish Netherlands, and in the name of his great-grandson had occupied the fortresses which the Spanish governor had delivered to him. William III. prepared for the new struggle that was at hand; but his death
1702 in 1702 left others to carry on his designs. He had no near heirs; and the government of the United Provinces again reverted to the States General. While Anne succeeded to the throne of England, Heinsius, the Grand Pensionary of Holland, directed the policy of Amsterdam. Louis had hoped in vain for any advantage from the death of his great enemy. He
1702 now saw the Grand Alliance signed, which banded the strength of the United Provinces, of England, and of the Empire, against him as before; and soon he saw the place of William filled by one, who, equally great

as a diplomatist, was greater as a general, and learned from the victories of Marlborough that he was no longer invincible. A.D. —

The preparations that were made are an illustration of the strength of the Republic at this time. While England gave her fleet and 40,000 men for the purposes of the war, the Republic agreed to maintain an army of 102,000. The Duke of Marlborough appeared in 1703 1703 at the head of the united forces; and, while the armies of the Empire were fighting in Italy and in Bavaria, began the task of reconquering the Spanish Netherlands. The rare skill which was displayed in this and the succeeding campaign is shown by the bloodless triumphs which he won. The French were never able to provoke an engagement; they saw their villages and towns occupied, the fortresses that commanded the navigation of the Maas opening their gates, and the whole country as far as Cologne and Bonn falling beneath the conqueror. More brilliant successes, however, even than these awaited the Allies. Much of Flanders had been won; and Marlborough was now able to direct his attention to the South, where the affairs of the Imperialists had met with less success. A march into Bavaria, and the glorious victory of Blenheim, which relieved the apprehensions of the Emperor, were followed by the occupation of the Electorate and by the retreat of the French beyond the Rhine. These were the results of 1704. In 1705, the English general, whose one campaign had saved the Emperor, returned to complete his conquests in the North. Ramillies, in its effects, became a repetition almost of Blenheim; and the Spanish provinces,

A.D. as far as Lille, became, as Bavaria had been, the prize
— of the conqueror. The final blow had been given to
the designs of Louis XIV. Charles III., not Philip V.,
was proclaimed at Brussels King of Spain; and, during
the remainder of the war, the whole country was
governed by the Allies in his name.

France itself might now have been invaded: but
the safety of the United Provinces was by this time
secured; and they hesitated to increase an expenditure
which they were already trying to curtail. The war
therefore for a time languished. But the arrival of
Prince Eugene in 1707 from Italy, to join the Duke
of Marlborough, soon caused its revival. The Allies
1708 advanced towards the French frontier; they routed
their enemy at Oudenarde; and were rewarded by
the fall of Lille soon afterwards. The following year
beheld the mighty monarch suing to them for peace.
The disasters of war had been followed by famine, and
his finances were exhausted. The pride, however, of a
victorious enemy required concessions such as neither
the affections of a father nor the honour of a king
could endure; and Louis, appealing to the sympathies
of his people, continued the war. The frontier
fortresses were falling. Tournai was taken, Mons was
invested. The battle of Malplaquet was an effort by
the French to relieve the last; it failed, however, in
its intention; and the Allies, though sufferers to an
enormous extent in the slaughter that occurred, were
still enabled to continue their designs.

France had renewed her appeal for peace; a party
in England was already murmuring against the
conquests which were being made for other nations

rather than for themselves; when the death of the Emperor Joseph occurred in 1711. Charles III., for whose claims the allies had fought, succeeded to his brother's crown. He was about to unite, as it seemed, the dominions of Austria and of Spain, and to revive the vast empire of Charles V. Such a union must prove at least as formidable as that under the House of Bourbon, which had caused the war; and all the sacrifices of the Allies, which had been borne in order to prevent the union of the Spanish with another crown, seemed likely to have as their one result the transfer of the danger to a new quarter. The States, however, were still eager to prolong the war. France was a near and an encroaching enemy; while Austria was distant, unlikely to scheme for Flemish conquests, and able by her strength in the Netherlands to give the surest barrier to the Republic against Louis XIV. In England, however, dissatisfaction was increasing. The war was promoted, it was said, by the Duke of Marlborough for his own advantage; and the indecisiveness of the campaigns of 1711 and 1712 encouraged these accusations. The recall of the great Duke, and the substitution for him of the Duke of Ormonde, was the first blow to the Grand Alliance. The new general, without the capacity of his predecessor, and acting under the instructions of ministers whose policy was peace, soon showed the disposition of England to withdraw from the coalition. At first inactive, then openly declining to share in the operations of the war, the conduct of Ormonde provoked the warm remonstrances of the States. The campaign of 1713 was sustained by their troops and

A.D.

1711

A.D. by those of the Empire unaided; while England was negotiating for herself a separate peace at Utrecht. The Republic felt that she was deserted. It was an abandonment of the Grand Alliance by its chief supporter; and the Grand Pensionary again protested. But the determination of England was firm; and the States, unwilling to risk the continuance of the war, became compelled to seek to be included in a treaty the conclusion of which they had done their best to prevent.

1713 By the Treaty of Utrecht, the partition of the Spanish inheritance was settled. The contracting parties agreed to the possession by Philip of the throne of Spain; but recognized the claims of the House of Austria, by proposing that Charles III. should receive the Spanish possessions in Italy and the Netherlands. The Emperor refused indignantly to accept such terms; but the events of another year, in which he found himself unsupported by allies, caused a change in his determination; and by the treaty of Rastadt, in 1714,
1714 he accepted the terms which had been proposed at Utrecht. The Spanish Netherlands passed therefore to Austria. It was not for her to cavil at the extent or the conditions of such a gift; and she received them diminished by the cession of part of Gelderland to Prussia, and by the restoration of Lille and other conquered fortresses to France. The United Provinces also had claimed some compensation for their services in the war; and the claim became the subject of a
1715 further treaty, which has become known as that of the Barrier, and which completed the settlement of Europe after the war. The Republic gave up the

Spanish territories she held, and she received in return the right of garrison in seven of the Austrian forts, with a subsidy to enable her to maintain their efficiency.

The Republic came forth therefore from the war secured anew by the voice of Europe and honoured among the nations for the part which she had borne. The lead which William of Orange had taken, the spirit of Heinsius his successor, who had directed the policy of his country to share unselfishly and trustfully in the great undertakings, and therefore in the successes, of the Allies, had raised her to a position unequal perhaps to her real strength but not unequal to her merits. The more ancient Republic of the Adriatic had found in the northern seas a worthy successor to perpetuate the fame of free institutions; and the ambassadors of the younger state were now admitted at foreign courts to the honours that had long been reserved for the haughty Venetians. The trade of Holland again had more than rivalled that of the Italian republics. During the century which had just elapsed, Dutch colonies had supplanted those of Portugal throughout the seas extending from the Cape of Good Hope to the peninsula of Malacca. In another hemisphere, the names of Cape Horn, of New Zealand, and of Hudson's Bay, still point to the ubiquitous presence of the Dutch navigators. They had failed indeed in an attempted conquest of Brazil; their North American possessions had suffered in the wars with England; and the town which once had been New Amsterdam had now become New York. But their trade had prospered even where their arms

A.D.

had failed. The markets of England and of Portugal were open to them, and the ships that bore the produce of every clime might choose unhindered the harbours that appeared most profitable for them. The merchant cities of Holland had devoted their whole energies to an increasing commerce; and if their martial spirit suffered during the years of peace their wealth at least commanded the admiration of surrounding nations.

The condition of the Austrian Provinces was a contrast to this. They had been made the great theatre of the war. Successive armies had trodden down their harvests, wasted their villages, thinned their population. They had been conquered and reconquered. They had furnished spoils to France, to Prussia, to the Netherlands. They were the common prey it seemed of Europe. Held by the Spaniards, coveted by the French, given to the Austrians, garrisoned by the Dutch, they hardly knew to whom they might or actually did belong. They had no rights, no existence scarcely, except on sufferance. The Emperor had desired to give to his new provinces some share in that prosperity to which their own position and the happy condition of their neighbours appeared to entitle them, but his wishes were to meet with disappointment. It was in vain that he had meditated the formation of an Indian company at Ostend, and of canals which should restore to Bruges and Antwerp the commerce of the seas. The threatened rivalry excited the fears of Holland; the voice of England lent itself to that of her ally; and Charles II., more eager to secure the Austrian succession for his

child than wealth for a small province, was constrained to abandon the designs which might have aroused too formidable an opposition.

The condition of the Dutch and Austrian Netherlands was thus a contrast. The Northern Provinces were now thriving in comparison with and as it might almost seem at the expense of the Southern ones. These years of peace are perhaps the brightest in their history. They were the longest they had known, and they followed upon a war which had raised them to their highest glory.

The climax of prosperity, however, had now been reached ; and it was reserved for the struggle for the Austrian succession to show that decline had begun. 1740 France, indulging in the opportunity that the weakness of Maria Theresa seemed to give, had aspired to the disposal of the Imperial Crown, and to the possession of the Flemish Provinces. The United Provinces beheld uneasily these designs ; but the long peace, and the pursuits of trade, had caused the martial spirit of her people to subside ; and the Dutch, from patriots, had degenerated into merchants. They now saw the French advancing into Flanders ; their deputies attended upon Louis XV. in his camp, and were the unwilling witnesses of his triumphs. But though the Barrier towns were falling they did not dare to declare themselves against the conqueror ; and it was not until the support of England had been vigorously accorded to Maria Theresa that they at length took courage to share in the defence of the Austrian provinces.

Yet the danger was as great as it had ever been in

A.D. the days of Louis XIV. The triumphs of Luxemburg
 1745 were now about to be equalled by those of Marshal
 Saxe. Courtrai, Menin, Ypres, and Furnes had been
 taken, and Tournai was now besieged. The battle of
 Fontenoy was fought for its relief. A united force of
 English and of Dutch advanced against the French
 army. It is unsatisfactory, however, to record, that,
 after a severe repulse at the beginning of the engage-
 ment, the Dutch withdrew from the contest, and by
 their inactivity contributed to the victory of the French.
 They had their reward in the contemplation of the
 results that followed. All Flanders was overrun;
 1746 even Brussels opening its gates. The tide had indeed
 set against them. In the next year their English
 allies under the Duke of Cumberland were again
 repulsed at Roucoux, and their own provinces were
 threatened by invasion. In their extremity, the cry,
 that old cry of distress, arose for the House of
 Orange. The jealousies of Provincial magistratures
 were overborne, and in obedience to the voice of the
 people a Stadholder again arose. William of Nassau
 Dietz, the heir to William III., and the successor to a
 line of Stadholders who had ruled continuously in
 1747 Friesland since the days of Philip II., was summoned
 to power. It was France again, as in the days of his
 great predecessors, that had upraised against herself a
 Stadholder, and it was again, as in those days, the
 same political necessities, and even the same family
 connection, that gave the support of England and of
 Austria to the new Chief of the Republic.*

William IV. had married, as William II. and

* He was fifth in lineal descent from John, brother of William I.

William III. had done, the daughter of a King of England. As the husband of Anne, the child of George II., he had added to the consideration of his House; and he was now able to secure for his descendants the dignities to which he had himself been elected. The States General in 1747 declared that both male and female heirs should succeed to his honours. The Constitution was thus in a measure changed, and the appointment of a hereditary chief magistrate appeared to many, as well as to the sympathizers with democracy, to be a departure from the pure ideal of a Republic.

The election of the new Stadholder brought less advantage to his people than to his family. He could not recall the glorious days of the great ancestors who had preceded him. Without abilities for war himself, and jealous of those with whom he was brought in contact, he caused disunion to arise among the forces of the Allies. A repulse was met at Lauffield; then Berg op Zoom was taken; and in the following year the city of Maastricht, the key to the United Provinces, was invested. Peace was a necessity; and when the terms at Aix La Chapelle restored their losses to the 1748 Dutch, and confirmed the stipulations of previous treaties in their favour, it was felt that the Republic was indebted to the exertions of its allies and not to any strength or successes of its own.

It was well for the Republic that she could rest. The days of her greatness had gone by, and the recent struggle had manifested her decline to Europe. During the war her contingents had been perpetually deficient; they had been defeated in successive battles, and

A.D. — had been dispersed to fill the prison fortresses of France. Her navy, so powerful in former years, was now reduced to twenty ships of war; her finances were exhausted; and her strength was again weakened by the recurrence of divisions between those who opposed or sided with the Stadholder.

The greatness which the Republic had enjoyed had in truth been almost an accidental one. It had been due to her natural position, which called her to the seas, and to her place upon the confines of mighty powers, whose ambition had continually forced her into the whirlpool of Europe. First Spain, then France and Austria, had coveted and fought upon the soil of the Netherlands. England, divided only by a narrow sea, had been attracted to support a struggling independence, and had then found that the Low Countries were the gates that opened Europe to her arms. The Republic had followed, and not led, in the affairs of the Continent; and, if the course of her history had been glorious, it was due to the current of events, which she had been enabled fortunately to profit by rather than to control.

Maria Theresa had opposed the peace; for, however necessary to Holland, it had still been a desertion of the cause of Austria; and, though compelled to accede to it, she now indignantly resisted the demands of the Dutch for the joint sovereignty of the Barrier towns. It was enough that they should have the right of garrison, without the sovereignty; and with the confirmation of this right the Republic was fain to be content. But the dispute was the commencement of a feeling of antagonism which continued throughout the

remainder of the century. The Republic clung to the Barrier in the full conviction of its value. Austria, on the other hand, beheld in it a constant mortification to her pride; and murmurs arose, even in the Imperial family, which it required all the wisdom and the firmness of Maria Theresa to resist. Yet in spite of irritation the next forty years were years of peace. A change of policy which prompted the Empress to ally with France in 1756 removed the chances of war 1756 from the Netherlands; and, while the Republic occupied herself with trade and with her colonies, the Austrian provinces found their employment in the repair of the ravages of war and in the promotion of those many schemes for good which won for the great Empress the affectionate remembrance of her subjects.

When war again arrived it was again external circumstances that compelled the Republic to take up arms. England was attempting to subdue her American colonies. She was mistress of the seas; and in her fear lest foreign aid should come to her rebellious subjects she had begun to assert the right of search over the ships of neutral nations. Holland resented such a step. She joined the league of Russia, 1780 Sweden, and Denmark, for the protection of their commerce, and accepted the principles of the Armed Neutrality. She even contemplated, as it was discovered, an alliance with the American insurgents. The exposure of her designs drew on her a declaration of war from England, which was followed by the temporary loss of many of her colonies both in the East and West Indies. But in Europe the struggle

A.D. — was more equally sustained. The hostile fleets engaged in 1781 off the Dogger Bank ; and the Dutch sailors fought with a success that made them claim a victory, and that at least secured them from the consequences of a defeat. The war indeed caused far less injury to the Republic than might have been supposed. She upheld the glory of her flag ; she found herself upon the side of powerful allies ; and, when she 1783 concluded peace in 1783, the whole of her lost colonies, with the one exception of Negapatam, were restored to her.

But the occasion of the war had been made use of by Austria, and a blow had been meanwhile inflicted upon the United Provinces the fatal effect of which was soon to be apparent. The Emperor Joseph II. had long protested against the existence of the Barrier : and he had seized upon the opportunity to undo by an arbitrary act all that the blood and treasure of Europe had been lavished to secure. “The Emperor will hear no more of Barriers,” wrote his minister ; “our connection with France has made them needless.” and the fortresses for which William III. had schemed, 1782 and Marlborough had fought, were razed to the ground. Holland, unable at the moment to resist, withdrew her garrisons in silence ; and Joseph, emboldened by his success, proceeded to ask for more. The rectification of the Dutch frontiers, the opening of the Scheldt, and the release for his subjects from the long-enforced re- 1784 strictions upon their trade did not appear too much to him. But the spirit of the Dutch had not yet left them. They fired at the vessels which dared to attempt to navigate the Scheldt, and war again appeared

imminent.* The support of France, however, upon which the Emperor had relied, was now given to the Republic, and Joseph recognized that he had gone too far. The Barrier, once destroyed, was not to be restored; but the claims which had been put forward were abandoned upon the payment of money compensation by the States.

The feverous age of revolution was now at hand, and party spirit, which had ever divided the United Provinces, and had been quickened by the intercourse and alliance with America during the war, broke out in an insurrection against the Stadholder, which drove him from his country, and compelled him to appeal to Prussian troops for his restoration. Almost at the same time, in the Austrian provinces, a Belgic Republic was proclaimed, the result in a great degree of imprudent changes which Joseph II. had enforced. The Dutch returned to their obedience under Prussian threats, and Belgium under the concessions of Leopold III. But these were the clouds foreshadowing the coming storm, beneath whose fury all Europe was to tremble.

France had already risen against her king, and had made him a prisoner to his kingdom and a cypher upon his throne. The cause of Louis XVI. was that of every sovereign; and the Emperor, especially, felt keenly for a monarch who was his sister's husband. Demands in favour of the captive were soon made. The French, already irritated by German sympathies and by the reception of French emigrants on German

* "They will not fire," Joseph had written. "They have fired," answered Kaunitz, his minister.

A.D. soil, compelled their sovereign to declare war. The
— first shock of the great conflict between France and
Europe was felt upon the soil of the Netherlands. A
1792 victory at Jemappes over the Austrians laid all
Belgium open to the French. A restless people were
allured by promises of independence; and Dumouriez,
the French General, was received as a deliverer. It
soon appeared, however, that the promises were not
likely to be fulfilled. The decrees of the Convention
and the excesses of the Jacobins alarmed the
Provinces; and their early enthusiasm for French
institutions vanished. At the same time the forces of
Austria, England, and Prussia were united upon their
soil; and again, as they had so often been, the
Netherlands were made the battlefield of nations.
The uncertain policy of Dumouriez might have
encouraged the Allies to march on Paris and transfer
the ravages of war to France. But divisions and the
pursuit of selfish interests forbade it. The English
preferred to attempt the siege of Dunkirk, the
Austrians that of the French frontier towns; and the
Prussians, accepting the example, retired to watch and
to share in the approaching dismemberment of Poland.
The conduct of the Allies exposed both themselves
and the Austrian Netherlands to ruin. New armies
came to vindicate French power. The Emperor
1794 Francis II. himself was witness to the defeat of his
troops, and began even to meditate the abandonment
of Provinces which had proved at once so burdensome
and so uncertain in their allegiance. The English and
the Dutch, against whom the French Republic had
declared war, were willing to fight on; but when the

Austrians finally withdrew towards the Upper Rhine, they became compelled to retire upon Holland, and the Belgic Republic, under French auspices, was at once formally proclaimed.

The United Provinces soon shared the fate of the Austrian possessions. Their frontier fortresses in succession fell. In vain the approach of winter and the opening of negotiations were relied upon for peace. The excessive cold, so far from aiding, defeated the efforts of diplomacy; for the frozen rivers were opening new roads before the French, and they eagerly pressed on to anticipate negotiation by conquest. Their path was cleared before them. The English, involved between the branches of the rivers, perceived that they were powerless, and abandoned the country. The Stadholder, after a formal abdication, followed them. Meanwhile returning exiles fanned in every city the scattered embers of democracy, and procured the adoption by the town councils of revolutionary principles. A change of government was easy in a country that began to give itself to the invaders; and the United Provinces were soon reconstituted as the Batavian Republic. 1795

The Netherlands had been the first in Europe to sink beneath the rising wave of French conquest; and their existence for nearly twenty years becomes a state of vassalage. The Belgic Republic ended its short life in 1795; its territory was annexed by a decree of the French Convention; and two years later the Emperor Francis was obliged to ratify the act in the Treaty of Campo Formio. The Provinces became thenceforth the silent sharers in the fortunes of 1797

- A D
 ——— France, without a claim to an existence or a history of their own. The Batavian Republic was only in name more fortunate. The Dutch continued to be called a nation, and their country was never blotted from the map of Europe ; but they were a nation only upon sufferance, their independence was lost, and it was the mere forbearance of the conqueror that continued to them a name after he had destroyed its reality. The condition of the Republic was in truth melancholy. For her alliance with France she had been compelled to pay in money, in the surrender of her fortresses, and in the abandonment of her cherished rights upon the Scheldt. She had been despoiled of liberty by those who called themselves her friends ; and she now found that she had incurred the vengeance of foreign powers, who only saw in her an ally of their great enemy. Her colonies at once became the prey of England. The Cape of Good
 1796 Hope, Malacca, the rich islands of Ceylon and the Moluccas were seized. The fleets, that should have guarded them, were taken or destroyed ; and after a
 1797 memorable defeat off Camperdown, in 1797, the flag of Holland vanished from the seas. Her very shores were now insulted with impunity ; and successive expeditions landed from England to harass, if not to subdue, the Republic.
- 1802 With the Peace of Amiens came the restoration of their colonies to the Dutch, and an indemnity to the Prince of Orange in the secularised principality of Fulda. But the speedy renewal of the war made these arrangements nugatory. The Dutch again were made the enemies of England through being still the friends

of France; and again their colonies became the prey of their formidable sea foe. All that the enterprise of former times had won was now lost. Trade and freedom, the objects for which toil and sacrifice had willingly been borne, were alike gone; and, while the English became masters of all beyond the seas, the very semblance of self-government was obliterated by the French, and the Provinces were called on to receive a foreign King.

A.D.
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Monarchy, by a reaction from the events of 1793, was now rising in favour throughout Europe. Napoleon had been crowned in 1804. With servile imitation, the Provinces had restored the office of 1804 Grand Pensionary; and soon, in obedience to the invitation of the conqueror, obsequious deputies arrived at Paris to ask for his brother Louis as their 1806 King. Step by step the asservience of the country was now completed. The new King soon found that the policy and the interests of his kingdom were to be unhesitatingly subordinated to those of France. Her territory was reduced by the cession of the provinces upon the left bank of the Rhine; her remaining trade was crippled by the enforcement of the Continental System. Louis saw, and to his honour felt for, the abasement of his subjects. For their sake he neglected rigorously to enforce the decrees that ruined them, and drew down upon himself the imperious rebukes of the Emperor, who found in him but a half-hearted supporter of his cause. Then followed fresh demands upon the country. The mouths of the Rhine were required by Napoleon. He had seen in Antwerp the arsenal which was to curb the power of

A.D. — England, and he had determined to bring the trade of central Europe to her port. Louis felt that to be king over a ruined and dismembered kingdom was a mockery; and, despairing for his people and for himself, he gave France the opportunity which she desired
1810 by the abdication of his throne. The abdication indeed was made in favour of his son; but the Emperor, annulling such a step, annexed the kingdom at once to France, and even claimed the merit of a benefactor, upon the ground that its taxation must thus be lightened.

The empire of Napoleon was now riveted upon the Netherland Provinces. An armament sent out by
1809 England for an attack on Antwerp had wasted miserably away amidst the marshes of the isle of Walcheren, and no attempt was made again to wrest the country from his power. Its subjection appeared to be assured; its political extinction was completed. Three years elapsed during which the Dutch Provinces were French departments, and Dutch soldiers swelled the levies and the conquests of France. In these years, however, the triumph of the conqueror had risen to its height. The tide, which turned at Moscow, ebbed faster on the plains of Leipzig, and Europe now roused herself again to put forth her strength, and Holland to re-assert her independence.

1813 The close of 1813 beheld the Dutch Provinces all rising to the old cry of Orange. Ambassadors were sent to England, and, in compliance with their wish, William Frederick, the son of the last Stadholder, embarked for Holland. His people met him with the offer of sovereignty; their remembrance of their old

rulers now blending with that of monarchy. In return, the Prince of Orange stipulated for a new constitution, which should secure their liberties to his people; and, with mutual confidence, both sovereign and subjects now united to restore the fortunes of their country.

An army was the first necessity, and was at once raised. The Hereditary Prince, arriving from Spain, where he had fought under the Duke of Wellington, was placed at its head. In February, 1814, the town 1814 of Brussels was occupied; the Belgians, too long accustomed to belong to others rather than to themselves, awaiting passively their fate. Then followed the march through France, the entry into Paris, and the abdication of Napoleon. To Holland, from considerations both of interest and gratitude, was at once allotted an increase of territory; and by a protocol, which was afterwards confirmed at Vienna, she received the Austrian Netherlands and the bishopric of Liege, while the colonies which had been taken since the first of January, 1803, and which included the rich island of Java, were restored to her by England. At the same time the Prince of Orange was required to exchange the scattered principalities in Germany, which had belonged to his family, for the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg; and, when these arrangements were finally completed, the country was proclaimed a kingdom, with William I., Grand Duke of Luxemburg, as its King.

The affairs of the Netherlands were thus for the time settled; and the events of 1815, however threatening, did not disturb them. The new kingdom saw with 1815 pride that on her soil were vindicated the liberties of

A.D. — Europe, and that in that vindication her troops and the heir apparent to her throne had borne a glorious part. Her position indeed had become changed; the earth was no longer girdled by her dependencies; the seas were no longer swept by her fleets. She had fallen undoubtedly from the proud eminence she had once occupied. But she had still the possibility of greatness left to her. Her territory at home was extended; it was secured to her by the voice of treaties, and by the material safeguard of the Barrier fortresses, which had again, through the munificence of England, begun to rise. She was the outpost of the world against France and Germany; and, could she but secure the consolidation of her provinces, long divided, but now taught by their French servitude what unity and what centralization were, she might well aspire to a position of security and of honour among the kingdoms of Europe.

It was late, however, in the history of the Netherland Provinces to unite them. For fifteen
1815-30 years they remained one kingdom; but their union was one not of affection but compulsion. The Belgians saw the prosperity of their country increasing; their roads, their canals, their manufactures, were alike improving; the equality of rights and representation, which had been stipulated for them, was scrupulously maintained; but they could not conquer their feelings of jealousy. The inherent animosities of race, the ancient hostility of the Roman Catholic to the Reformed religion, and the different views existing as to the interests of trade, divided the people. There were soon murmurs against favours which the Dutch

were said to enjoy, and against alleged inequalities of taxation. Severity against the press next raised a dangerous enemy. There were grievances, which in themselves were slight, but which became exaggerated, and the prevalence of discontent prepared the way for insurrection. Then came the Revolution which over- 1830
threw the throne of Charles X., and Belgium was smitten, as she had been before, by French example. Republican agitators were eager for a return to the principles of 1793; and even the more numerous and more moderate party believed that the time for a separate administration in Belgium had arrived. Against the House of Orange personally there was as yet but little feeling. It was a struggle not against a dynasty so much as against a principle, and many would have been well content that Belgium and Holland should remain, like Norway and Sweden, under separate administrations but under one head. Even in the crisis the King did nothing to forfeit the consideration of his subjects. The Prince of Orange was sent to Brussels to enquire into the wants of the Belgian population, and the King himself, in opening the Chambers at the Hague, declared his readiness to meet the wishes of his people. But the revolutionary tumults in Brussels still continued to increase. The presence of a military force became necessary; and a collision which ensued between the troops and the people was followed by the retreat of the soldiers and by the proclamation that William I. was de-throned.

The Dutch cared less than might have been expected for these events, and at the Hague a vote was passed

A.D. by the Estates for the complete separation of Belgium and Holland. Meanwhile a provisional government had been installed in Brussels, and the course of the revolution, which in its first ardour had satisfied even its republican supporters, was now moderated. Within a month the National Assembly that had been summoned declared itself in favour of monarchy, and within a year another King was reigning in the provinces which William of Orange had lost.

The whole course as well as the success of the Belgian revolution depended upon the countenance which it received from the Great Powers of Europe. These had been willing for the sake of peace to consent to the undoing of their own work, and in a
1831 conference at London had sanctioned and had even defined the limits of the two kingdoms. But they would not have sanctioned a republic in their midst; and the Belgians were aware that monarchy was the condition of their independence. Accepting therefore the inevitable they now began to seek a sovereign for their throne. The most popular among the numerous candidates were the Duke of Leuchtenberg and the Duke of Nemours; but the son of a Beauharnais was opposed by Louis Philippe, and the son of Louis Philippe by all Europe. Leopold of Saxe Coburg, the widower of the Princess Charlotte of England, was next proposed. He was known to have the support of Great Britain, to be acceptable to France, and to be unobjectionable at least to other Powers; and by these
1831 merits his election was secured, and he entered Brussels as its King.

The Belgians had conformed in the matter of their

government to the wishes of the Great Powers : they were less amenable, however, upon the question of territory. By the first articles of the conference in London, the new state had been assigned such portion of the kingdom of the United Netherlands as had neither belonged to Holland, nor to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg in 1789 ; and Holland upon these terms had agreed to recognize the new kingdom. But as the cause of the Belgians prospered, their demands increased ; and, regardless of the fact that Luxemburg formed part of the Germanic Confederation, and was the private property of the House of Nassau, they demanded its transfer to the Belgian kingdom. They had even been able to persuade the Conference to promise its powerful mediation for this object. The King of Holland resented naturally such claims ; and, being inclined no longer to recognize a sovereign who was the representative of them, declared war against him. Within a fortnight after the triumphal reception of their King, the Belgians had been ignominiously routed at Louvain, and saw the Dutch before the gates of Brussels. It seemed clear that Holland would reconquer her supremacy. She had devoted to self-organization and to the increase of strength the time which Belgium had spent in anarchy. The Great Powers, however, could not allow that a kingdom which they had but just created should be crushed ; and their declaration that peace must be preserved was supported by the advance of a French army for the relief of Brussels, and by warning messages which compelled the King of Holland to withdraw his troops.

A.D. Intervention soon developed into open war. Influenced by the energetic protest of Holland, the Conference, which sat at London upon the affairs of the two kingdoms, had abandoned the proposal for the cession of all Luxemburg, but it still demanded a portion of it in exchange for some territory in Limburg. The King of Holland again refused to consent. He still was holding the citadel of Antwerp within the Belgian frontier. He thus commanded the trade of Belgium, and he felt the strength in negotiation that this possession gave. The Great Powers, however, were now desirous of bringing the question to a final settlement; and, as no further modification in their proposals was contemplated, it remained only to deprive Holland of the fortress in which she felt her strength. A summons therefore was issued requiring both Dutch and Belgians to withdraw from all positions which they occupied within each other's limits. The Dutch refused compliance; and France and England unitedly made preparations by sea and land to enforce their demands. The other Powers recoiled from such an extremity. There had been unanimity as yet upon the Belgian question; but it had been a unanimity which only the fear of a general war and conscious impotence at home had caused; and Russia, Austria, and Prussia had throughout been but unwilling spectators of a movement which had given such a blow to the principles of their Holy Alliance. To share in an armed intervention, and to aid in the plunder of a sovereign with whose principles and with whose cause they really sympathized, was more than they could bear.

A protest, however, was even now the extent of their opposition. With Poland, Hungary, and Italy disquieted joint action was impossible; and the assurances of France and England as to the strictly local and temporary character of their intervention were of necessity accepted.

Europe, however, did not behold without alarm the preparations of the Western Powers for open war against Holland. In France a revolutionary government, in England a reformed parliament, had altered the policy of the two kingdoms; and the rights of the people, rather than the advantage of their sovereigns, were now chiefly considered. A French army of sixty thousand men laid siege to Antwerp, while English 1832 ships blockaded the Scheldt. Brave, even in the absence of all hope, the Dutch refused to yield; and, though numbering but 5000 men, withstood for four and twenty days the assaults of the besiegers. It was a siege which, from its causes and its isolation from all other acts of war, stands alone in the pages of history. Antwerp fell: but the brief episode of war was followed by an armistice, which Holland in her 1833 impotence, and France and England in the attainment of their end, were alike willing to accept.

The Belgian question, so far as concerned the active intervention of Europe, was ended. Holland had been deprived of her chief strength; she had bound herself not to renew hostilities and to commence negotiations for a definite peace. The new kingdom looked with gratitude to its protectors. In the case of France, this tie was strengthened by the marriage of King Leopold to a daughter of Louis Philippe; and the friendship

A.D. of the two countries, both in its causes and effects,
— recalled the days of Joseph II. France was again the
sure ally of the Netherland Provinces; and in the
1797 convention of the London Conference, which relieved
the Belgians from the necessity of maintaining the
Barrier, we have the last mention of a subject so long
and so hotly contested. The Eastern Powers, at the
1838 Congress of Muntz Grætz, agreed to recognize what
they had been unable to prevent; and the question of
the two kingdoms ceases henceforth to be prominent.
But the final settlement between Holland and Belgium
was still delayed. The question of Luxemburg, the
apportionment of debt, and regulations for traffic, were
matters which the jealousy of the rival kingdoms
kept open for full six years. Meanwhile, the Belgians
suffered by their exclusion from the Dutch markets
both at home and abroad, and the King of Holland
was powerless in his much-disputed Grand Duchy.
Sensible at last that nothing could be gained by delay,
William I. declared his intentions of acceding to the
Articles of 1831, which provided for compensation
being made to him in Limburg for what he should lose
in Luxemburg. But the time was unfortunate; and
even this demand for peace seemed likely now to be
the occasion for a renewal of war.

The Belgians saw that under the Articles much of
Luxemburg and Limburg must finally pass from them.
In the earlier years of their existence as a nation they
had accepted this necessity, but as its fulfilment had
been delayed the idea had grown that it might be
evaded. New causes had also given a fresh value to
these Provinces. Religious troubles in Rhenish Prussia

had arisen, and enthusiasts were now dreaming of a Rheno-Belgic Confederation, in which both Luxemburg and Limburg would be essential links. So fierce became the passion to retain them that the whole nation would have rushed to war in their defence. It mattered little in the excitement of the time that all Europe was against them, preferring to abide by the arrangement that had long since been traced out. Their ardour was unchilled. The sudden failure, however, of the Bank at Brussels brought a death-blow to their aspirations. War became financially as well as politically hopeless; and a bill was regretfully sanctioned, which, by authorizing the King to accede to the Articles surrendering the disputed territory, 1839 set the Belgian question finally at rest.

Nine years had thus been spent before the final severance of Belgium and Holland was completed. Nine more were now to come which seemed by their tranquillity and peace to be the compensation for past discord. Both kingdoms accepted their position, and ceasing jealously to confront each other ceased also to require the watchful guardianship of Europe. Then came the revolutionary storms of 1848; but even these 1848 passed by without disturbance of the general peace. In Holland agitation was disarmed by a revision of the Constitution. The remaining privileges of the aristocracy were abolished, and the government was brought into close likeness to that of England. In Belgium, the near neighbour and the cherished child of France, the danger appeared greater. Leopold, remembering that it was from the people that he had so recently received his throne, would have resigned

A.D. — into their hands the sovereignty which they had conferred upon him ; but the refusal of his ministers to approve of such a step was at once the reward and the testimony of the wisdom and the temperance with which he had reigned ; and the repulse of the revolutionists who would have invaded the kingdom, and the maintenance of internal tranquillity undisturbed, were sufficient proofs that their refusal had been justified.

The stability and increasing prosperity of the Belgian kingdom was owing indeed in no small degree to the virtues of its King. When he died, in 1865, after a reign of four and thirty years, he left behind him the reputation of the wisest statesman of his time, and a kingdom which had been raised from anarchy until it stood among the first for industry and for content in Europe. There were passing uneasinesses still felt from the occasional struggles within the kingdom between the liberal and priestly parties, and from the apprehensions that the ambition of the third Napoleon might again threaten the independence of the country. The death of the King had been anticipated with fear ; it seemed as though it might be made the opportunity for an attempt by France upon the kingdom. There were no longer ties of kindred between the sovereign houses to avert annexation, and there still remained all the inducements which had before invited it. The danger passed, however ; the settled contentment of the Belgians with their condition, the respect which their country and their King had won, was their defence ; and Leopold II. succeeded tranquilly to the throne which the wisdom of his father had assured to him.

In the period between 1866 and 1870, when the jealousy of France was seeking compensation for the aggrandisement of Prussia, the apprehensions of Belgium were renewed. In 1870, when war broke out, danger again appeared imminent. Her position between France and Germany seemed to tempt them by its importance to the violation of her territory; and England, in the fear of this, came forward to obtain from either Power a renewal of the earlier guarantees, and would herself have landed troops to aid in the defence of Belgian soil. The knowledge of this intention, and the energetic attitude of the Belgians themselves, may be thought to have preserved the country. The danger disappeared. As the Germans pushed the French across the Belgian frontier they were disarmed; and the rapid course of victory soon relieved the apprehensions, by decreasing the importance, of the threatened country.

The events which had led to this war had been perhaps the only occurrences which had even threatened seriously to disturb the peace of Holland. To William I. had tranquilly succeeded William II. and William III. In 1866, William III., in his capacity of Grand Duke of Luxemburg and a member of the Germanic Diet, had found himself legally at war with Prussia, but by the consent of both parties no overt act was committed. In the following year he was invited by France to sell his Duchy, as its possession would be some satisfaction to the French, who were jealous of the power of Prussia since her victory at Sadowa. The sale, however, was never accomplished, for the Prussians could not allow a fortress of the strength

A.D. of Luxemburg to belong to France; and the French
— were obliged to content themselves with the demolition
of the fortifications, which had been maintained at
the expense, and for the benefit, of the German Con-
1871 federation. In 1871 there began a long and somewhat
disastrous war in Sumatra. The colonies of Holland
along the Guinea Coast had been ceded in that year
to England as the price of removing certain restrictions
which had limited Dutch progress in the East; and,
by a curious fatality, both nations, the one in Asia,
and the other in Africa, became involved in war through
the exchange. The ultimate triumph, however, of a
civilized over an uncivilized population was sure,
though the process might be slow; and Holland, like
Belgium, has continued with no serious interruptions
of its peace.

III.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND GREECE.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND GREECE.*

THE rise of the empire of the Ottomans in Asia, their passage into Europe to share in the factions of the Greeks, their encampment for a century and a half in the provinces of Thrace and Macedonia, and their final conquest of Constantinople, are all familiar through the famous pages of Gibbon. An Eastern Sultan ruled 1453 in the palace of the Cæsars; he assumed their titles, and prepared to enforce their claims. All Europe shuddered at the announcement; the antagonism of Cross and Crescent had begun†; and the sovereigns of Christendom, who had been too selfish and too indolent to aid in the defence of the Greek Empire, now realized at length the dangers that had been brought to their own doors.

A D.
—

Mahomet II. was indeed a formidable adversary.

* The Ottomans reject the name of Turks. That belongs to the rude Turcomans of Asia, and to apply it to an Ottoman is to place him on the same level with them. Hammer, "*Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*," xvii. 36.

† The crescent had been the symbol of ancient Byzantium, and was connected with the worship of Diana. The Ottomans did but adopt it at their conquest of Constantinople.

A.D. — He was a sovereign who not only conquered but appalled men, a ruler of wisdom and sagacity, a tyrant with passions so ferocious as to cause him to be known as the scourge of his race. Of intense ambition, at the head of a people whose religion was the triumph of their sword, and who had sprung forth armed into the company of European nations, with a capital that seemed to make him lord not only of two continents but of two seas,* he appeared destined to subdue the trembling kingdoms of the West; and it seemed as if the barbarian invasions which had followed the fall of Rome were now likely to be repeated after that of Constantinople.

The strength that shows itself in foreign conquest has its root at home; and a brief notice of the government of Mahomet may well precede that of his conquests. The authority of the Sultan was supreme: his tenure of it was ensured by the notorious policy which enjoined the murder of all possible competitors for the throne.† His government was a military occupation: his empire was divided into districts, which were held, as in the feudal kingdoms of the West, upon the tenure of military service. His army was finer than any that the Christian nations could produce, and it included a body guard which had already become terrible to Europe under the name of Janissaries. This body guard, the institution of

* "The diamond set between two emeralds and two sapphires."

† A law of Mahomet declared, "The majority of legists have said that those of my children or grandchildren who succeed to the throne may execute their brothers in order to secure the peace of the world: they should act accordingly." The Koran says, "Disquiet is worse than putting to death." Hammer, iii. 302.

Amurath I., had been formed out of the Christian children who became captive or were received as tribute from the nations conquered in war. They grew up without domestic ties, and without permission to acquire them; and, dependent for all upon the favour of their lord, they had no interests except in his service and in war. The empire of the Sultan extended over a territory that stretched from the Euphrates to the Danube, and included probably thirty million inhabitants. It was ruled under Mahomet with sagacity and firmness. The European provinces especially received his care. The population of Constantinople and of the towns destroyed by war was forcibly recruited by the importation of foreign settlers. Prosperity speedily revived. A wise tolerance accorded the free exercise of their religion to the Greeks, and preserved to the Empire the arts and industries of an ingenious people. The pursuit of civilization was encouraged, and, though the sword was ever directed against Christendom, yet Christian talent was ever welcomed at the Porte,* and was invited to aid in the many efforts of Mahomet for the improvement of his people.

The Christian chroniclers may be pardoned for dwelling most upon what most interested them. They looked not at Constantinople itself, for upon their own frontiers they saw the Turks, and knew their arms far better than their arts. Within a year from the great triumph of Mahomet the province of Servia was 1454

* The Porte, so called because from the most ancient times the business of an Eastern sovereign was transacted at the gate. Hammer, iii., 298.

A.D. overrun, and the fortresses of the Danube were
1456 reached. In 1456 an army of 200,000 men appeared
before Belgrade. The indifference of Austria, too
jealous of Hungarian power, and the apathy of other
nations, might even have allowed the great frontier
fortress to fall. But there still survived in Europe
some sparks of the crusading spirit. The preaching of
John Capistran, a Franciscan monk, procured the
assemblage of 40,000 men : their own fervour, and the
skill of their commander, John Hunniades, relieved
the town ; they entered after having dispersed the
Ottoman ships ; and when the assault was made, and
even the walls had been scaled, they again drove back
their enemies, and caused the Sultan and his army to
abandon the siege.

The Ottomans were not invincible, and the mind of
Christendom was relieved. The attention of Mahomet
became directed towards other conquests, and for a
time there was comparative tranquillity along the
northern frontier. The seas and islands that lay
around Constantinople were now attacked, and the
coasts of Asia as well as of Europe beheld the
1460 victorious progress of the Sultan's arms. In 1460
the Morea, whose weakness under the contending
despots of the House of Palæologus had encouraged an
1461 attack, was subdued. In the following year the new
empire of Trebizond, under David Comnenus, was
conquered, and the last traces of Greek sovereignty
were thus effaced. The islands of the Ægean shared
gradually the fate of the mainland. Lesbos was taken
in 1462, and Eubæa in 1471. And had it not been
for the valour of the Knights of St. John, who success-

fully repulsed an Ottoman force in 1480, the fall of Rhodes would not have been delayed until the days of Solyman. In the East there were also conquests to record. The Ottoman armies entered Caramania, and the submission of its Sultan added a new province to the dominions of Mahomet. The conquest of Kaffa, of Azof, and of the Crimea, followed in 1475, and the European as well as the Asiatic shores of the Euxine acknowledged an Ottoman master. Nor did the attacks against the Northern and Western Powers of Europe remain unrenewed. Wallachia and Bosnia were conquered; Moldavia was invaded; Styria and Carinthia were ravaged; and Albania, which, during the life of Scanderbeg, had been able to maintain an honourable independence, was finally subdued in 1467. Even Italy, beyond the waters of the Adriatic Sea, was threatened. After war, long continued, with the great disturber of her maritime possessions, the Republic of Venice had allied with Mahomet, and in her jealousy had induced him to turn his arms against her Italian enemies. The Ottoman forces crossed the Adriatic; and again the Powers of the remotest West were startled from their apathy; for Naples belonged to Aragon, and the Pope himself was threatened. The taking of Otranto increased the general consternation. But the death of Mahomet came speedily to relieve the universal fear. The Ottoman armies received no reinforcements; they were compelled to surrender their conquest after the tenure of a year; and the danger, if not the apprehensions, of Italy passed away for ever.

The reign of Mahomet had completed the subjugation

- A.D. tion of the Greek Empire. The kingdoms of Europe had been dismayed at its conquests, and at the horrors which had accompanied them; but they had not fallen, as they had feared, before the conqueror. Their apprehensions even were now beginning to subside, and a space of forty years ensues, during which the inactivity of one Sultan, and the Asiatic wars of another, gave a respite which was perhaps the salvation of the neighbouring States of Christendom.
- 1181-1520
- 1481 To the "Scourge of his Race" succeeded "the Mystic," to Mahomet, Bajazet II. The attention of the new Sultan was at first engaged by the ambition of Prince Djem his brother, who was aspiring to the possession of his throne; and the doubtful tenure of his own power became a necessary cause to Bajazet for relinquishing the attacks on foreign enemies. The accomplishments and the misfortunes of the pretender have earned for him the sympathy of chroniclers. Defeated in his schemes in Asia, he threw himself under the protection of the Knights of Rhodes; and being transferred successively into the hands of the King of France and of the Pope was kept by them in custody as a valuable hostage for peace. But when Pope Alexander VI. had so far forgotten the interests of Europe for his own as to accept the bribes of
- 1495 Bajazet, and poison his competitor, the causes of inaction appeared to be removed, and war was soon resumed against the Christian nations. The operations of Bajazet, however, have neither the interest nor the results of those of more energetic conquerors. The Venetians and the Hungarians were again attacked.
- 1500 Lepanto, Modon, Navarino, and Coron, possessions that

still remained to the Republic in the Morea, were wrested from her. But the Ottoman navies had not yet gained their strength: they were opposed by the Great Captain of his day, Gonsalvo of Cordova, and they were unable to accomplish more, while by land the successes deserve no mention.

Becoming a slave to pleasures and to superstition, the Sultan was every day less willing to recur to the distracting exercise of war. The suppression of a rebellion in Asia, which the zeal of a fanatic, surnamed 1511 by his opponents Scheitan Kouli, had raised to formidable dimensions, was the chief event in the later years of his reign. But although his religion and his power were alike threatened, the Sultan never roused himself to take the field. He had degenerated, as his Janissaries began to murmur, from his ancestors; and, for the first time in history, the chosen guard began to meditate upon the use of that power whose full extent as yet they had hardly seemed to know. The ambition of Selim, the third son of the Sultan, was aroused. The favour shown to Ahmed, an elder brother, was made an excuse for rebellion; and a resignation in favour of the younger son was extorted from Bajazet, who died a few days after his abdication of the 1512 crown.

A nation that has no impulses except the will of its sovereign has its history recorded through its sovereigns' lives; and the tale of the vicissitudes of the Ottoman power, the most autocratic of all empires, must pre-eminently consist in a series of biographies. Selim, whose hand was credited, though perhaps untruly so, with his father's death, began his reign by

A.D.

A.D. the murder of his brothers, an omen of forthcoming bloodshed that was destined to be terribly fulfilled. The kingdoms of the West, however, still were spared. The great opportunity of their weakness, through the religious wars that were dividing them, was unknown, or was at least uncared for by the Porte ; and the history of the reign is one of Asiatic, not of European, conquest.

Before proceeding to subdue his foreign enemies, the Sultan determined to destroy at home the enemies of his faith. The fury of a despot and the zeal of an inquisitor were united in his character. He knew that the Shiite heresy had spread widely within his dominions ; and he obtained through spies the names
1513 of 40,000 subjects, who paid the penalty of death for having been suspected. The day of St. Bartholomew had been anticipated ; and Selim now turned towards his foreign wars with the belief that he had earned from heaven the triumphs which were awaiting him.

The growing power of Shah Ismail, the conquering founder of a dynasty in Persia, had become formidable. The Ottoman Empire could brook no power threatening its own ; and the religious zeal of Selim combined with policy in urging an attack upon a heretic and an ambitious nation. Surmounting hardships and privations, which the devastation of their plains by the Persians had made inevitable, the Sultan penetrated into the country ; he defeated his enemies in a great victory at Calderan, and entered their capital in triumph. He could not, however, reconcile his armies to a continued endurance of the sacrifices which the campaign had required of them, and their impatient

murmurings compelled his return to Constantinople. But his viziers secured for him the provinces of Diarbekir and Kurdistan, and his empire was extended along the banks of the Euphrates. A.D. —

Syria and Egypt were the next objects of attack. The might of the Mamelukes, the danger which they also seemed to threaten to the recent conquests of Selim, and the desire to constitute himself protector of the Holy Cities of his faith, made the Sultan now turn towards the south. A great victory near Aleppo left all Syria prostrate before him. The desert was traversed; and at Ridania, on the road to Cairo, a new victory delivered Egypt into his hand. Never had the Mamelukes fought more bravely, but never had their discomfiture been more complete. Their army was destroyed; and treacherous massacres, that followed their defeat, completed the overthrow of their dominion. Selim ruled over provinces which almost doubled the extent of his Asiatic dominions. He had destroyed a power before whose strength his own might have been shaken; and he now obtained, by cession from the submissive House of Abbas, the dignity of Caliph, which added a new strength and sanctity to his power.*

The kingdoms of the East had bowed before him; the rewards of heaven appeared to have been given; and the time seemed now to have come in which the Sultan might turn upon Europe. The formation of a navy to be the scourge of the Mediterranean, and

* The granting or confirming of titles belonged to the House of Abbas. The title of Sultan had been obtained from the Caliphs by Bajazet I.

A.D. — above all to conquer Rhodes, became his object ; while at the same time preparations were begun for an attack on Hungary. But death determined that another hand should reap the triumphs of the West ;
1520 and Solyman, succeeding to what his father had prepared, began at once the conquests which have made his name glorious.

1520-66 A reign which extended over nearly fifty years, and which became the climax of the Ottoman power in Europe, was now opened. Upon the thrones of the Empire and of Hungary were seated Charles V. and Louis II. ; and, though one was hereafter to curb the Ottoman power, the youth and inexperience of both seemed at present to presage their defeat. The civil strife and religious differences of which Germany had become the scene might encourage the anticipations of conquest. Solyman beheld an enfeebled continent, against which he could launch a nation united and inured to war, and troops which by their valour and by their discipline were confessedly superior to the armies of the West. His Janissaries alone were now 12,000 in number ; his standing army which was maintained, apart from levies in the time of war, is reckoned in addition at 150,000 men ; and, as he surveyed the weakness of his enemies and the fullness of his own strength, he turned with confidence into the paths of war.

Two roads were open to him against his European enemies. One led by land along the valley of the Danube, the other across the waters of the Mediterranean Sea. The ambition of Solyman attempted both ; and the successes which he achieved in each, though

chronologically intermingled, may be grouped for the sake of clearness together. A.D.

The subjugation of Bosnia, and the surrender of 1521 Belgrade, the city which had so obstinately repulsed the arms of Mahomet, were the first triumphs of his reign. The path to future conquest was now open, and soon an army of 200,000 men advanced against the young King of Hungary. Louis, whose indolence unfitted him to cope with his great adversary, appealed in vain to Europe, and was urged, with only 30,000 men, into battle against the overwhelming host. His defeat and death, in a battle which is still 1526 known as the Destruction of Mohacz, in 1526, appeared to give the kingdom to the mercy of the conqueror. Pesth itself surrendered: and had it not been for one of the fortunate diversions, which have aided Europe by recalling the attention of the Porte to Asia, the Sultan might have remained to make all Hungary his own.

The spread of Ottoman conquest was delayed, but was soon again resumed. The kingdom, which Solyman had for the time abandoned, had been exhausted by war, and was now torn by dissensions. Two claimants struggled for its vacant throne; the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, and John Zapolya, the waivode of Transylvania. On the side of Ferdinand were rank and his relationship to Louis, on that of Zapolya his birth as a Hungarian; and both could claim that they had been elected and crowned by their respective parties. Zapolya, however, less mindful of the interests of the country than his own, submitted to become the vassal of the Sultan; and

A.D. the fatal connection thenceforth aided and excused the
 ——— interference of the Ottomans. For forty years the
 frontier suffered their attacks, and they extended
 their dominions in the cause, as it was said, but often
 at the cost, of their ally. In that cause, and for the
 chastisement of Ferdinand, who had presumed to call
 upon the Sultan to surrender Belgrade, the Ottoman
 1529 troops advanced, and for the first time reached the
 walls of Vienna. For a whole month the Austrian
 capital endured a siege; but the approach of winter,
 and the want of artillery, compelled the army to
 retreat: and their own disheartenment, and the
 increase of strength which was given to the Empire
 by the Peace of Ratisbon, prevented any renewal by
 Solyman of the siege.*

The designs of the great Sultan were checked; and
 the Hungarian campaigns, which continued intermit-
 tently throughout the remainder of his long reign, are
 henceforth less marked and interesting. A peace,
 1534 which was concluded in 1534, divided Hungary
 between Ferdinand and Zapolya; and the ambition of
 Solyman was gratified by the homage and the tribute
 which were alike paid to him by both claimants. For
 a time the country rested in comparative tranquillity:
 but the death of Zapolya in 1540, and the supposed
 necessity of protecting the claims of an infant heir,
 renewed the pretexts for interference. Solyman again
 entered the country; the whole course of the Danube
 as far as Gran, and almost all South Hungary, became
 his; and, securing the persons of the widowed queen

* The Sultan is even said to have pronounced a curse against any
 of his descendants who should renew the attack.

and her child, he compelled them to renounce their rights over what he had conquered, and to content themselves with the possession of Transylvania as a tributary fief. The great acquisitions of the Porte upon the side of Hungary were thus made, the fruit undoubtedly in a large measure of the disputes which still continued between the Christian Powers. In the struggles that were prolonged there is but little interest: peace was at length concluded in 1562; and in that year the Sultan had the glory of showing to the world a Roman Emperor among the tributaries of his throne.*

While Hungary had been ravaged and Vienna besieged, the shores of the Mediterranean had also been made to tremble; and the fame of the naval exploits of the reign has perhaps exceeded that of the land achievements. The island of Rhodes, which had defied his ancestors, and which still remained a defiance to himself, was made the first object of Solyman's attack. His supremacy in the *Ægean*, his communications with Egypt, were alike threatened by the continuance of its independence. His spies now told him that the time was come; and while the walls were dismantled and even demolished for repair a fleet of 400 vessels arrived before the isle. To the hosts that thus surrounded him the Grand Master could oppose but 6000 men. They were men, however, whose glorious antecedents, whose position as the bulwark of Christendom, whose hatred of Islam, and

* Ferdinand I., who had succeeded to the dignity in 1556. There were stipulated offerings to the Sultan at stipulated times. The Imperial court gave to these the name of presents; the Porte, with more justice probably, declared them tribute.

A.D.

finally, perhaps, whose despair, gave an undauntedness to their defence that made it worthy of the best days of chivalry. The besiegers in vain attacked the walls that were thus manned; and it required the presence of Solyman himself to give effect to the siege. Under the eye of their sovereign the troops redoubled their efforts; but it was not until six months had passed, and 3000 men had been slain, that the Sultan received the capitulation of the Knights. The Grand Master and the survivors were permitted to retire; and in the honour which was paid to them by Solyman was shown a generous appreciation of the defence which the value of the prize had inspired.

The ships of Solyman were now at liberty to advance to further conquests, and an act of policy secured for them the accession of a new strength. The exploits of a corsair, Barbarossa, had engaged the attention of the Sultan; and Solyman was now able, by enlisting his services, to make the conquests of the pirate his own. The great highway of the Mediterranean was traversed; the ports of Venice, Italy, and Spain, were threatened. The coast of Africa became a refuge, and the settlements upon its shores were stations, for the observation and the plunder of the Christian Powers. The old expedient of an entry as allies to remain as masters had won for Barbarossa the kingdom of Algiers, which he had hastened to lay as a tributary province at the Sultan's feet. The same expedient was now made use of to secure for Solyman the sovereignty of Tunis. From these shores the Ottoman vessels sailed to conquer and to destroy; and although an expedition under the Emperor Charles V.

recovered Tunis in 1535, it did not end the ravages which were continued by a roving fleet. A.D.

That fleet again received a new importance and a new strength by its alliance in 1537 with one of the Christian Powers of the West. Francis I., opposed alone to Charles V., had found no help in any quarter but the East; and his easy conscience, and the value of the Sultan's aid, had united to make him careless of the reproaches of Europe upon so profane an alliance for the Most Christian King. The ships of Barbarossa became the allies of France; and by concert with her laid siege to Nice, and ravaged Naples, while that kingdom had been drained for the war that was being waged in the Milanese. Succeeding years beheld the Lilies and the Crescent united upon the coasts of Italy and Spain, and the miseries of siege and plunder following in their track. And when at length the Peace of Crespy, which dissolved the alliance, was signed in 1544, the fame of Solyman had become spread throughout all the kingdoms of the West. 1544

The triumphs of Barbarossa, who died in 1546, were continued by a successor. Dragut, the pupil of the great corsair, attempted to reconquer the settlements upon the coast of Africa, and to expel the garrisons of Charles V. His siege of Tripoli secured that town; and though for a time domestic troubles distracted the attention of the Sultan from the West he was able after their close to continue the career of conquest. New reinforcements were despatched to aid the fleet; and the utter overthrow of the Spaniards, and the reconquest of the isle of Gelves, were the first incidents of the renewed war. An attempt was even made

A.D.

upon the Spanish territories of Oran and Mazarquivir; but the powerful aid of the Knights of St. John defeated the design, and caused Solyman to turn once more upon the Order which was again defying his
1565 power.

The island of Malta, which had been assigned by the Emperor Charles V. to the Knights of St. John after the fall of Rhodes, was of importance by its position both to Christians and Ottomans. It was a station that lay midway between the continents of Africa and Europe, and that might be employed to defend or to chastise either. The Knights of the Order had made it famous. Their ships and sailors were the best in Christendom; and they had shown the most uncompromising hostility to the Ottoman fleets. The fate of Rhodes, as Solyman believed, was now to be repeated; and the second siege which the Knights endured has become as famous as that which had preceded it. Its end, however, was destined to be different. The vigour and the ferocity of the assailants had indeed almost succeeded; the island was upon the point of being surrendered. But the determined courage and the perseverance of the Grand Master prevailed, and the long-delayed assistance which came at length from Sicily preserved it to Christendom. While the kingdoms of Europe vied in honouring the defenders of Malta, Solyman bewailed the loss of his leader Dragut and of nearly 30,000 men. A pretended triumph and a declaration of victory could not deceive his people, and the whole Empire felt the blow which the resistance to his arms had caused. Nor could Solyman or his successors avenge the disgrace. In

the next year, 1566, the great Sultan died in Hungary, at the siege of Szigeth; and the following reigns exhibit a decline which relieved the apprehensions of Christendom. A.D.
1566

The continued career of conquest in the West has detracted from the notice that might otherwise have been given to the spread of power in the East. Peace to the infidels of Europe had meant war to the heretics of Asia; and Persia, the constant enemy of the Porte, had been repeatedly invaded. The great fruit of these invasions had been the acquisition of Bagdad in 1534, and the annexation of wide territories in Armenia and Mesopotamia. At the same time the dominions of Solymán had been extended in Arabia; his ships had sailed over the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, and had been implored to aid the struggles of the Indian princes against the invading Portuguese. From the coast of Algiers to that of India his fame was spread; and his subjects, beholding his far-reaching might, delighted, and with some justice, in proclaiming him the Lord of his Age.

It is not sufficient, however, to have traced the conquests of Solymán. His government at home demands attention before passing to the reign of his successor. The Lord of the Age to his subjects, the Magnificent to foreign nations, Solymán was known also as the Lawgiver. The pomp and circumstance and the success of war had been accompanied by the still rarer glories of a wise administration. In the midst of his conquests the great Sultan had remembered justice; and the laws which he framed for the internal government of his dominions have secured for him an ever-

A.D. ——— lasting remembrance. The public works which he encouraged, the buildings that were erected, the care that was given to the repair of ravages by fire and pestilence that at different times desolated his capital, and the generous appreciation of art that was shown, were all the testimony to an enlightenment of mind, and appeared the pledge of greatness for his people. No worthy structure, however, it is melancholy to add, was raised upon the strong foundations of Solyman. A halo of glory has indeed surrounded his reign ; but it is the splendour of a setting sun, not that of a rising one.

Selim the Sot, whose rule succeeded to that of Solyman the Magnificent, was the child of the famous Sultana Khourrem, a Russian slave, who, under the name of Roxolana, has had the history of her beauty, her power, and her crimes, narrated to Western ears. Her ambition for her child had caused her to conspire the death of Mustapha, the eldest son of Solyman ; and in the place of a prince whose natural gifts had seemed to mark him out as likely to become the greatest of all the descendants of Othman there now ruled an incapable voluptuary. The imprint, however, of great men and of great measures was not at once to be effaced, and the fame of Mohammed Sokolli, the vizier of the new Sultan, has redeemed to some extent the incapacity of his master. But the reign is unmistakably the commencement of the decline of Ottoman power, the ebb of that tide of fortune and success which had risen to its greatness under Solyman.

1568 A truce with Austria, impolitic in view of the

divisions which still enfeebled the Christian frontier, A.D.
gave leisure for the pursuit of schemes against new
enemies. A remarkable attempt was made to establish 1569
a canal between the waters of the Volga and the Don,
and to acquire possession of Astrakhan in order to
attack the Persian Empire hereafter by sea as well as
by land. But the Russians dispersed the troops that
had been sent out to make the attempt; and this
encounter, the first between the two nations that
history records, has since seemed ominous of their
respective destinies. A more fortunate result attended 1570
an expedition against Cyprus, which, after an obstinate
defence, was taken in 1571. But the conquests and
the schemes with which the Porte was credited excited
fresh hostility; and the Mediterranean Powers, uniting
in a league, sent out a force of over 200 vessels, which
found the Ottoman fleet within the Gulf of Lepanto.
A battle, as famous perhaps as any that history 1571
records, was fought. Ships to the number of 224,
men to the number of nearly 50,000, were lost by
the Porte. The allies did not pursue their triumph;
and the victory has consequently been deemed as
barren as the waves on which it had been won. But
though the Ottomans were left at liberty to refit and
to repair their fleet, their claim to empire on the seas
had met a crushing blow. The navies of the Christian
Powers were triumphant; and a feeling of security,
which was justified by the result, pervaded Europe.

The conquest of Cyprus was the last great exploit
which ever added materially to the dominions of the
Porte; the battle of Lepanto was the final blow which
destroyed its naval superiority. The days of greatness

A.D. — had gone by. The kingdoms of the West were developing their strength, and had learnt the policy of union and of peace among themselves. Their armies had acquired the discipline and had learnt the lessons in which the Ottomans had shown so formidable an example; and their navy rode triumphant on the seas. The Empire, no longer in the hands of Charles V., with foreign interests to absorb its power, could bestow an undivided strength upon its own affairs; and the Emperor Ferdinand was looking forward with some hope to an incorporation of Hungary, which should end the weakness, and ensure the safety, of his eastern frontier. As the pre-eminence of the Porte, however, and the dread of it declined, a wider intercourse for her with Europe began. The nations which had feared a master would treat more readily with an equal, and had no objection to profit by the commerce of the East. The Republic of Venice had been the first to hold amicable intercourse with the Sultans: her island possessions, her continental territory, had brought her into immediate contact with them; she had offered her congratulations upon many of their successes; and had even allied with them from an early period, as in 1481, against their common enemies; her envoys resided constantly at Constantinople. France had been next in courting their alliance; the necessities of Francis I. impelling him to seek for aid. Hungary and Austria had been driven by war into negotiations. Poland and Russia, too near to neglect conciliation, had sent embassies of peace. By the end of the 16th century more distant kingdoms had been added to the number. Elizabeth

of England invited the Sultan Amurath III. in 1579 A.D.
to ally with her against the King of Spain, and was
able to secure for her subjects commercial privileges
which caused the foundation of the Levant Company
in 1581. The Dutch demanded privileges in 1609 ;
and the schemes of Gustavus Adolphus in 1633 caused
the opening of communications between the far-distant
kingdom of Sweden and the Porte. Slowly the Sul-
tans were beginning to take part in the schemes and
combinations of the Christian Powers, from which
they had hitherto so contemptuously stood aloof.

Five reigns succeeded to that of Selim, during which 1574
the progress of decline continued marked. The indo-
lence of Amurath III., the incapacity of Mahomet III.,
the inexperience of Achmet I., the imprudence of
Othman II., and the imbecility of Mustapha, con-
tributed to bring the Ottoman Empire into a con-
dition of anarchy and weakness. During the reign of 1574-95
Amurath hostilities with Austria were renewed, and
successive losses testified to the enfeebled state of the
Ottoman arms. The Sultan, far from emulating the
victorious energies of his great predecessors in the
field, contented himself with putting up his prayers to
heaven in the mosques of Constantinople. The re-
verses continued during the reign of Mahomet III. A 1595-1600
brilliant victory at Cerestes, in which the united
forces of the Imperialists were defeated by the Otto-
mans under the Sultan in person, gave a momentary
gleam of success ; but its promise was not destined to
be realized, and the war dragged on disastrously until
the reign of Achmet I., his successor, when the Peace 1603-17
of Sitvatorok was signed in 1606. Already the Otto-

A.D. ————— mans had submitted, during the continuance of the strife, to offer, and had not waited to receive, proposals of peace. They now consented for the first time to treat with a Christian sovereign as their equal; and the Peace, though not materially curtailing the extent of their Empire, becomes an epoch from having witnessed the surrender of pretensions which would never have been abandoned in the plenitude of power.*

The decline of personal energy in most of the reigning Sultans, the jealousies that arose among those who laboured to secure the power which their masters seemed no longer able to grasp, the spread of corruption within every class, and the discontent and insubordination that prevailed under a weak and venal government, account in a great measure for the decline of the military glory of the Ottoman nation. The talents of an heir excited the mistrust of a reigning sovereign; and often the prince who reached the throne succeeded in doing so only through his incapacity. A similar distrust confined the members of the royal house to the seclusion and the ignorance of the harem. The earlier Sultans had given to their sons the government of provinces, in which they learnt by practical experience the art of ruling. But Mahomet III. was the last who ever had the benefit of this preliminary training. His successors were either children, or men whom the policy of their predecessors had never trusted with power; and the country was ruled by a succession of sovereigns

* The truces until now had been graciously accorded "by the Sultan always conqueror to the infidel King of Vienna always conquered." The ordinary terms of diplomacy now succeeded to this style.

whose vigour, both of mind and body, was either undeveloped or exhausted. While the Sultans, through indolence or incapacity, were careless of their power, there were others who were struggling to grasp it; and the intrigues of the sultanas, and of factions, divided the nation. A tale of slander, or a party triumph, became a title to the seat of power; and, while success was without permanence, men hasted only to be rich, and not to govern well, and so the State was starved and murmuring. The disorders of the Empire were inflamed by Amurath III., who was the first to set the example of the sovereign sharing in the sale of offices. A secret enemy is said to have instigated this; and the popular appreciation of the measure is conveyed in the tale that the adviser left the royal presence exulting; "the Sultan himself," he said, "sets the example of corruption, and corruption must destroy his Empire."

With the weakness of administrators the spirit of insubordination rose. The Janissaries especially became formidable. The constitution of their body had been gradually changed. They were no longer men who lived for the State alone, and who followed bravely, if blindly, the cause of the Sultan to whom they were devoted. Instead of remaining separate from the nation they had become mingled with it. One Sultan had allowed them wives, another had admitted to their ranks both Ottoman as well as Christian children; and the force which in its institution had been a foreign one, without sympathies or interests, had now become a national one, with all the hopes and claims of kindred and of faction finding

A.D. utterance within its ranks. Their power was at once less dangerous abroad, and more formidable at home: it had become a power for evil rather than for good; and in the disturbances of the time their name is prominent. As many as ten of their rebellions are counted in the reign of Amurath III. alone; their rivalry with the Spahis, or royal horse guards, produced what for the time was almost a civil war; and in the depositions of Othman II., of Mustapha, and of Ibrahim, three sovereigns who lost their crowns within the space of thirty years, their influence was predominant.

1618 To Achmet I. succeeded Othman II. The Sultan Mustapha, the brother of the late sovereign, had at first been called upon to mount the vacant throne; but the weak intellect which had preserved his life soon showed him to be unfit to rule, and within three months he had returned to the seclusion of the palace. The reign of Othman was a short and an unfortunate one. He attempted reforms, which were intended to increase the royal power, and to destroy the corps of Janissaries and Spahis who had so often threatened it. But he had not the capacity to carry out the designs he meditated; and he fell a victim to the hostility which he had aroused and could not quell. The
1622 Janissaries, now risen to a height of insolence and power, deposed and murdered their sovereign, who has the melancholy fame of having been the first of the Ottoman Sultans to fall a victim to the ferocious passions of his subjects. The imbecile Mustapha, replaced upon the throne from which he had been degraded, was powerless to guide or to govern his

people; and, after nominally reigning for a year, was again deposed in 1623, in favour of Amurath IV., a child of eleven, the eldest surviving brother of the late Sultan. For ten years the contests for power continued, and the State was torn between the sultanas, the viziers, and the rebellious soldiery. The young Sultan could not save his friends; his own throne seemed likely to be lost before the turbulence of his subjects. But at the age of twenty-one he roused himself to action; and a vigorous rule of seven years has made his reign to be recorded as a period of revival both in the history of his family and of his nation. Becoming a tyrant more merciless even than Mahomet II., he has been called the Nero of the Ottomans; and fifty thousand of his subjects are said to have perished by his command within these seven years alone. But he has the praise of having once more asserted the vigour of the throne. He crushed rebellion; he added to his revenues; he suppressed abuses. A long war with Persia was brought to a triumphant close; the city of Bagdad, the lost conquest of the great Solymán, was recovered. Again Constantinople beheld her sovereign returning in triumph from the wars; and Amurath IV., who was the last to imitate the example of his great ancestors in leading forth his armies, has at least the glory of having worthily in his own person sustained their fame.

Decline, which for a time appeared to have been checked, was continued under Ibrahim, whose reign, which lasted from 1640 to 1648, was one of effeminacy, extravagance, and corruption. Again the deposition

A.D. of a Sultan was resolved on ; and death, as ordinarily
happens, soon followed deposition. The son of
1649 Ibrahim, a child of six years old, was proclaimed as
Mahomet IV. The disorders of the State for a time
continued. As in the reign of Amurath IV., suc-
cessive changes of viziers attest the conflicts for
power. But at length the choice was made of one
who ended the long period of anarchy, and caused the
opening of a new epoch in the history of his country.

1656 Mohammed Kiuprili, the first of a great family in
which the art of ruling soon appeared to be hereditary,
succeeded to office under the auspices of the sultana
mother, who thus showed herself a noble contrast to
others of her rank, who had aimed at power by per-
petuating weakness. The new vizier was chosen, not
as a reward for successful rebellion, or for pliancy,
but because he seemed the likeliest to govern well ;
and, though already seventy years of age, he entered
with no feeble hand upon the task. His rule was one
of marked severity ; but its praise is to be found in
the re-establishment of order and of strength within
the Empire. Measures, which had been begun, but
which had languished, during former reigns, received
a new impulse. To the cares of reform at home was
added the conduct of a war with Venice. The island
1645 of Crete, belonging to the Republic, had been attacked
under the reign of Ibrahim ; and, though the war had
long been desultory and without result, the energy of
Kiuprili gained some successes, and prepared the way
for the long-delayed conquest of the island under his
successor. Upon the western frontier the long weak-
ness of the Christian Powers during the Thirty Years'

War, and the divisions of the Ottoman Empire within itself, had given a period of comparative tranquillity; but soon the recurrence of disturbances in Transylvania caused the aged vizier to prepare for renewed war. He was not destined, however, to share in it. His life was closed in 1661, after five years of government, whose success ensured for him the acceptance of his son as his successor. The fame of Ahmed Kiuprili has been greater even than that which his father had acquired. Under his command the Ottoman army advanced through Hungary in 1663, besieged and took the strong city of Neuhausel, and, though defeated by the genius of Montecuculi in the memorable battle of St. Gothard, and compelled to accept a peace upon the basis of that of Sitvatorok, was able to return to Constantinople triumphant from having added a new fortress to the Empire. In 1669, the fall of the town of Candia, after a siege which had lasted more than twenty years, and had cost the Porte 300,000 men, completed the reduction of an important island; and the talents of the vizier were displayed in the development of his new acquisition. Poland, remonstrating with the Sultan upon his reception of the Cossacks of the Ukraine, who had appealed for protection, was answered by war. The fortress of Kaminiéc, the key of the southern frontier, was taken; and though John Sobieski, her future king, was able to defeat the Ottomans at Khoczim in 1673, the country was compelled, by a peace concluded three years later, to surrender in addition all Podolia, and to renounce her claims to sovereignty within the Ukraine. The Empire had now reached to the furthest limits

A.D.

A.D. that it was ever destined to attain. Tranquillity at home, under a wise government, had accompanied its foreign successes; and the name of Ahmed Kiuprili has not unworthily been handed down as that of the greatest statesman of Ottoman history.

But again decline became apparent when the second Kiuprili was no more. Kara Mustapha, the Sultan's son-in-law, succeeded to the vizierate, and the first years of his administration were marked by defeat. The Russians, already dreaded with a prophetic
1677-81 instinct, defeated the Ottoman armies, and compelled the cession of a disputed territory in the Ukraine. The great attempt, and the great failure, of the siege of Vienna next occurred, and all Europe saw that the tide of Ottoman power was now ebbing.

Ambition, and the need of occupation for a discontented people, are said to have been the causes of Kara Mustapha's campaign. The pretext was the appeal, as in more ancient times, of Hungarian insurgents for help. Portents are said to have announced disaster, but the Ottoman forces still began their march. Their preparations and their object had not been concealed, and had been sufficient to spread terror throughout Germany. Bavaria, Saxony, and Poland had promised their assistance to the Emperor; but as the time of need drew near, their succours had not arrived, and Leopold was left alone with an army of but 40,000 men, while his people, without confidence either in his allies or in himself, were flying from a city which seemed doomed before the hosts of the invaders. On
1683 the 14th of July Kara Mustapha appeared before the walls of Vienna, and from that time until the 12th of

September the city was invested by his troops. An immediate assault might probably have been successful ; but in distrust of his own forces, in the hopes of wealth which plunder might have dissipated, and in the belief that reinforcements could not arrive, the Grand Vizier preferred a blockade. Time passed, which gathered together armies of relief ; and the appeals of the beleaguered city were at length answered by the presence of John Sobieski, King of Poland, and a mixed force of 70,000 men. The deliverance of Vienna, and the rout of the Ottoman army which ensued, are events which, glorious in the history of Christendom, form a decisive epoch in that of Turkey. The fortunes of the Porte were changed. She had entered upon the rapids down which the gathering stream of Western power was bearing her to her fall ; and as the curious stranger still surveys, within the museums of Vienna, the trophies of the pomp and power which had proved so well-nigh fatal to the Austrian capital, he can only marvel at the swiftness of the changes which have brought so memorable a power low.

Disaster followed on disaster. The Venetians and the Russians now united with the Austrians and Poles ; and, while the northern frontier was threatened, the Morea and Dalmatia were in arms at the call of the Republic. Almost the whole of Hungary was lost to the Imperialists ; all the Morea to the Venetians. The successive viziers, whose short rule attests the disorder and incapacity of the government, appealed in vain to Austria for peace, and had to suffer the losses of war. Kara Mustapha had lost his head,

A.D. and Mahomet IV. was now to lose his throne, before
 1687 the mingled panic and indignation of his people. The
 1687-91 short reign of Solyman II. might have ended in the
 1689 same manner, had not another of the house of Kiuprili
 for a time restored order, and given the promise of
 equalling his ancestors. But after a few successes the
 new vizier fell in battle, and the short-lived fortunes
 of his country fell with him. Better indeed might it
 have been had his successes not been won. They had
 encouraged Solyman II. to refuse the overtures which
 the Emperor Leopold had at length been willing to
 make, and to listen to the persuasions of Louis XIV.,
 who, himself at war with Austria, had urged that his
 successes in Flanders and on the Rhine must secure a
 peace with better terms for the Porte. The war
 accordingly was prolonged through the disastrous
 1691-1695 reign of Achmet II., and into that of Mustapha II.
 1696 Azof was taken by the Russians in 1696. In 1697
 1697 a defeat at Zenta, by the victorious arms of Prince
 Eugene, completed the misfortunes of the Porte. The
 1697 treaties of Ryswick, concluded in the same year, dis-
 appointed all the expectations of help from France ;
 1699 and at length, in 1699, the Sultan Mustapha II.
 acquiesced in the terms of the Peace of Carlowitz.*

All Transylvania and the chief part of Hungary
 were surrendered to Austria ; Podolia and Kaminiec,
 which had been won from Poland, were restored to
 her ; the Morea and Dalmatia, which had been con-
 quered by the Venetians, remained in their hands ;
 and Azof in the hands of Russia. The importance of

* The destruction of the Acropolis at Athens by the Venetians in
 1687 is one of the memorable incidents of this war.

this treaty for the vast cessions that were made is great: it is important also for its effect upon the position of the Ottoman Empire among the family of nations. A Sultan for the first time submitted to enter into a congress of the European Powers. In that congress, Russia, herself now first admitted to such a meeting, took an ominous part; and England and Holland, though neither of them parties to the war, were invited to mediate, and were allowed to discuss the conditions upon which the fate of the Ottoman Empire was to turn.

There is no fall so rapid in the history of nations as not to have its breaks; and the successes of the earlier half of the 18th century redeem in some degree the misfortunes of the 17th. The Peace of Carlowitz was signed in 1699. In 1703 the Sultan Mustapha was 1703 deposed, and a brother, Achmet III., succeeded to his throne. A reign of seven and twenty years ensued, which saw hostilities resumed with Russia, Venice, Austria, and Persia. The conquests and the victories which were now achieved outbalanced the defeats. The reign of Mahmoud I. succeeded; and Austria, still 1730 asserting her pre-eminence, was compelled to sign a peace as fatal to her interests as that of Carlowitz had been to the Porte. Again the strength of the Ottoman Empire appeared to have revived; and it was not until succeeding years had shown an exhaustion and an inability for sustained effort that the return of power was recognized to have been but transitory.

The Porte had viewed with anger and with fear the schemes of its old enemies at Azof. Aggressive steps in Poland, and even upon the Ottoman frontier, had

A.D.

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A.D. increased the irritation ; and the entreaties of Charles
1710 XII., after his misfortunes at Pultawa, determined
Achmet to engage in war. The campaign, so memor-
1711 able in history, in which the great Czar of Russia was
reduced to the abandonment of all hope, not only of
conquest but of liberty, for himself and for his army,
is too familiar to need repetition. The Grand Vizier,
Mehemet Baltadji, imposed humiliation upon his
enemy, and he regained for his country the possession
of Azof ; but he allowed the army which he had sur-
rounded, and its sovereign, to go free, and he missed
the opportunity, which was never again to recur,
of crippling a nation, whose strength, had it been
then cut short, might never have grown to its present
formidable dimensions. The recovery of Azof was
1715 soon followed by that of the Morea. The Venetians
had owed their conquest to the strength of their allies ;
alone they had no power to maintain it ; and the
operations of a few months, in 1715, restored the
1716 whole peninsula to the Porte. In the following year,
however, the Emperor Charles VI. declared war, and
the successes of the Ottomans were more than counter-
balanced by the defeats which they sustained at the
1716 hands of Prince Eugene. The loss of the great battle
1717 of Peterwaradin, of the city of Temeswar, and of Bel-
grade, were blows that of necessity disposed the Sultan
1718 to peace. By the Treaty of Passarowitz, in 1718,
the conquests upon either side were retained ; and
the Morea thus rested under Ottoman dominion ; but
again wide territories were abandoned by the Porte ;
the remaining districts of Hungary, large portions of
Wallachia and Servia, and important frontier cities

were surrendered. Never before had the dominions of the Sultans been so far pushed back; the pre-eminence of Austria over her old enemy seemed definitely secured. A.D.

Wars that removed the Ottoman armies from the gaze of Europe became the occupation of succeeding years, and triumphs that formed a worthy parallel to the successes against Russia and Venice atoned in some degree for the disasters upon the Danube. The condition of Persia had aroused the ambition of her neighbours. Invaded by an Afghan force, with her sovereign dethroned, and the succession disputed, she had seemed a tempting and an easy prey. Russia, still led by the aggressive hand of Peter the Great, had attempted to secure the provinces along the shores of the Caspian; and the Porte, now jealous of such encroachments, united with her old enemy for a share in the spoil. She did not prevent the establishment of Russian power upon the south of the Caucasus, and the consequent opening of a passage for the Czar into Asia; but in a brilliant campaign she annexed large territories for herself, and conquered upon the south-east as she had already done upon the south-west. The triumph of the Ottoman arms was indeed but transitory. The abandonment of the war by Russia, and the subsequent rise of the great conqueror Nadir Shah, caused victory to be followed by defeat. But the reign of Achmet derived some lustre from his early successes; and the peace, which eventually gave back his conquests, was not concluded till the reign of his successor.

Impatience of defeat, however, and a dislike for the

A.D. excessive pomp and luxury which was encouraged by the court, and which is still remembered even amid the tales of Oriental magnificence, provoked disturbances; and Achmet III., who had been raised to the throne by an insurrection, descended from it under like influences. He abdicated, as the Sultan Mustapha
1730 had done before; and Mahmoud I., the son of Mustapha, succeeded to him. War was continued in Asia, but with a continuance of defeat; and at last
1736 the peace was signed in 1736, which re-established the frontiers as they had existed under Amurath IV. The discouragement of ill success, and the renewal of anxieties in Europe, had prompted a withdrawal from the contest; the Christian Powers were again threatening the Porte; and all her energies were now required to defeat their combinations.

The Treaty of the Pruth had stipulated for the non-interference of Russia in the affairs of Poland; yet, in 1733, the Empress Anne had combined with Austria to enforce the election of Augustus III. of Saxony as King. At Constantinople, suspicion as to the designs of Russia had been excited; at St. Petersburg, the determination to repair the humiliation of
1736 the Pruth was hardly disguised. In 1736 the Russian troops advanced on Azof, and war was forced upon the Porte. During the next three years, repeated ravages of the Crimea, the capture of Oczakof, and a resistless entry into Moldavia, marked the successes of the Russian arms. At the same time the Porte was assailed by Austria, who saw, as she believed, an opportunity of adding to her conquests. But the designs of the united enemies of the Sultan were

baffled. The armies of the Emperor were no longer
commanded by Prince Eugene; their strength was
now enfeebled; and returning conquest gilded for a
time the banners of the Porte in this its last serious
struggle with the House of Austria. A glorious
victory at Crotzka, which the Ottomans, with pardon-
able exaggeration, have termed a second Mohacz,
struck terror into the Emperor, and won a peace both
from Vienna and St. Petersburg. The great frontier
fortress of Belgrade was surrendered to the Porte;
the cessions which had been made at Passarowitz in
Bosnia, Servia, and Wallachia, were restored; Russia,
deprived of her allies, submitted to demolish Azof,
and restored most of her conquests; and the Ottoman
Empire rested for a time with a glory that had been
long unknown. 1739

Mahmoud I., adored by his subjects as a conqueror,
might have been revered also as a saint. His love
of peace or of good faith made him refuse, upon the
death of Charles VI., to share in the schemes that
were to despoil the daughter of his old enemy; and
the noble conduct of a Mahomedan sovereign gave an
example to the less scrupulous monarchs of Christen-
dom. The Ottoman Empire reposed throughout the
remainder of his reign, and during that of Othman III.,
upon a glorious peace, and in the tranquillity of these
years affords a contrast to the turbulence of Europe.
The age of literature was now at its height. Poets,
philosophers, and historians were famous; and even
the ministers of the Sultan did not disdain to lead in
the cultivation of letters. But the growing strength
and the ambition of the Western Powers refused to 1740 1754-57

A.D. — prolong the days of peace ; and it was from Poland again that the cloud arose which was to grow into a storm that was to overwhelm the Empire.

With Sultans from their education often effete, with ministers who could have no security in their office and who were constantly changed at the caprice of a despot, and with an army which through the weakness of its rulers had become full of its own power and impatient of control, there was no strength to stand against the Powers of the West. On the thrones of Europe were now seated Maria Theresa, Catherine II., and Frederick the Great : three sovereigns such as no other age has yet produced. Of their kingdoms, two at least were rising with rapid strides to power ; and their armies were being fashioned under the eye or by the example of one of the greatest masters in the art of war. Ambition also had kept pace with strength, and the will to devise was present as well as the hand to execute. Before a coalition of such giants the Porte was lost ; and the treaties which provided for the dismemberment of one kingdom became at the same time the death-blow to the greatness of another.

1757-73 Mustapha III., while he had viewed with jealousy the designs of Russia, had pleased himself with the belief that the rising power of Frederick the Great would be a check upon them ; and in the hope of
1768 Prussian aid he boldly resented a violation of his territory in 1768. The burning of the little town of Balta, by some Russians who pursued a band of Poles, was followed by a march of 300,000 men upon the frontier ; and the troops of Catherine retired before

this host until the way to Moscow seemed open. But the incapacity of commanders, and the insubordination of men, allowed the opportunity to pass; and the Russians returned, with an increase of strength, to scatter the army which had become divided within itself and disappointed in its hopes of aid. Already Catherine and Frederick were bound to each other by the hopes of common spoil, and Prussia could no longer aid the enemies of her ally.

Succeeding events now show the circle of Russian power fast closing round Constantinople. On the north of the Black Sea and in the Crimea, under the Caucasus and in Armenia, in Moldavia and Wallachia, and finally even in the Mediterranean, the Russian forces urged the attack. The affairs of the south attract attention from their novelty. Russian vessels, which had sailed round Europe, appeared in the Archipelago.* The Greeks, who, under the tolerance of successive Sultans, had retained much of their nationality and a faith which united them in sympathy with the Russians, were urged to second by their rising the attack on the Porte; and they fought with a savage fury that has more than once detracted from the lustre of their valour. Hopes at the same time were indulged that Egypt, long restless under the Porte, and Syria, would throw off their

* The Ottomans could not believe that there was any communication between the Baltic and the Mediterranean, and accused the Austrians of allowing the Russian ships to come by way of the Adriatic. Similarly, in 1800, the Grand Vizier denied that English troops could come from India to Egypt by way of the Red Sea. And yet the ships of Solymán had fought the Portuguese upon the Indian Ocean.

A.D. allegiance; but it was not here that the contest was
— to be decided. The Russian ships were able indeed to
1770 destroy the Ottoman fleet in the harbour of Tchesme,
and the impatient valour of a single vessel, which
insulted the Bosphorus, proclaimed the weakness of
Constantinople. But the Russians were too slow to
recognize their opportunities, and the remainder of
the war in the Mediterranean was uneventful.

In the north the results were greater. Azof and
the Crimea, so long coveted by the Russians, were lost
for ever in 1770; in Moldavia and Wallachia the
Ottoman armies were again defeated; and along the
Lower Danube every fortress that the Sultan held was
taken. The rapid progress towards Constantinople
excited for the first time the anxiety of Europe; and
diplomacy began to mediate for peace. It mediated,
however, in vain. The war continued; and though
the courage of the Ottoman troops secured them some
advantages in 1773, the renewal of defeat, and the
spread of demoralization, compelled them in the ensuing
1774 year to seek for an immediate peace, which was
arranged, after the discussion of only seven hours, in
the village of Kainardji. Russia herself had suffered
in the strife; and the prospect of the partition of
Poland, for which the first treaty had just been signed,
disposed her to a cessation of the war. Upon the
anniversary of the day on which the Treaty of the
Pruth had been concluded the Ottoman ministers
atoned for it by that of Kainardji. They agreed to
the independence of the Crimea and of all the Tartar
country stretching eastward from the Boug to the
river Berda that runs into the Sea of Azof; they

allowed the retention by Russia of the important places of Azof, Kertch, Yenikale, and Kinburn; they admitted for the first time the right of free navigation in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean; and finally they agreed to improve the treatment of the Principalities, and to listen with all due respect to the remonstrances of Russia either on their behalf or on that of the Greek Church and its ministers at Constantinople. Historians have seen in these stipulations the germs of all the subsequent calamities of Turkey, and have considered this Peace to mark an era not less distinctly than that of Carlowitz. The one was the last great triumph of the Austrian arms; the other was the inauguration of Russian conquests.

The Empress Catherine might well look forward to the absorption of the peninsula which was now detached and floating between two empires. A further mischief, moreover, had been caused by the example which had been set to other dependencies of the Porte which might wish to achieve their independence. The dismemberment of empire had in fact begun. As early as the 17th century the distant Regencies of Tripoli, of Tunis, and of Algiers, had passed from the control of the Sultans and had ceased to acknowledge more than a nominal dependency.* The Pashas of Bagdad, of Jannina, and of Scutari, began now to attempt to throw off their allegiance. More important again than these, Egypt was slipping from the Porte.

* The inability of the Porte to suppress piracy had caused England, France, and Holland, to conclude treaties in the 17th century with these Regencies direct. Their independence grew; and soon the only trace of their submission was the formality of applying to the Sultan for a firman to confirm the election of their Deys.—*Hammer*, ix. 29.

A.D. Since 1736 her sovereignty had been but the prize of
successful rebels, who on occasions had refused even
to pay tribute, and who now only tolerated a pasha
from Constantinople as a cloak to their own dominion.
Abdul Hamid, who had succeeded to the throne but a
few months before the Peace of Kainardji, saw every-
1784 where his power passing. In 1784 he was called upon
to recognize the annexation by Russia of the Crimea,
which till so lately had been his. He heard of the
triumphant progress of Catherine towards the south;
and must have known that her own wishes, like her
sign-posts, pointed to Constantinople. The news of
1787 threatened insurrection came again from Greece; and
in despair the Sultan declared war against his formid-
able enemy.

Kinburn, the Russian fort upon the entrance to the
Dniester, was first attacked. The Ottoman forces,
however, were repulsed by the skill of Souvarof, whose
1788 fame was dated from this time. In the following year
the troops of Austria appeared upon the Danube.
The schemes for the partition of Poland were still
leaguering the enemies of the Porte against her, and,
attacked in different quarters, she was now compelled
to divide her strength. The Grand Vizier was able
to repulse the troops of the ambitious but unwarlike
Emperor, but he could not at the same time preserve
the frontier of the Dniester. Oczakof, the Ottoman
counterfort to Kinburn, was taken, and a complete
defeat at Rimnik dispersed the army of the north-east.
Events, however, in the West began to tend towards
the deliverance of the Porte. The French Revolution
occurred; and Joseph II., absorbed in the contempla-

tion of its course, relinquished all active participation in the war. His successor, Leopold, in fear of the growing power that seemed to threaten the Austrian Netherlands, concluded the Peace of Sistova, and surrendered the districts he had occupied. Russia still indeed continued to fight on, and in the capture and massacre of Ismail inflicted new calamities upon the Porte. But the voice of Europe was now again beginning to be heard. Catherine found remonstrances arising; she saw, moreover, that events in Poland were likely to require her whole attention; and she accepted in 1792 the Peace of Jassy, by which the 1792 | Sultan surrendered the whole country northward of the Dniester, with the coast on which so soon arose the rich city of Odessa.

Successive conquests during the eighteenth century had thus pushed back the frontiers of the Porte. Her sovereignty, which had extended around the northern shores of the Black Sea, was gone, and a new power had arisen which was rapidly confining her dominion to the southern coast. But with the close of the century there came a lull. The great monarchs who had schemed and conquered passed from the world's stage, and, even had worthy successors to them arisen, their ambition and their wars must have given place to the greater actions and interests of the West. The events of the French Revolution were engrossing Europe; and the Ottoman Empire, more distant and less concerned than other Powers, found now an interval of peace.

Selim III. had succeeded to the throne in 1789, three years before the Peace of Jassy. He had seen the defeat of his armies, which he could not but

A.D. attribute to the passions and the selfishness of those
— very Janissaries, whose tumultuous hosts could now
no longer stand against the trained and disciplined
armies of the West; and he welcomed tranquillity at
home as an aid to the reforms he meditated. The
1798 attempt of Napoleon upon Egypt, the nominal depen-
dency of the Porte, aroused his indignation, and forced
him for a time into an alliance with Russia and with
England; but the courage of his troops in the defence
of Acre, and the successes of their English allies,
dispelled the danger; and when peace was made in
1801, the Sultan even became attracted towards the
brilliant conqueror whom he now no longer feared.
From that time up to the battle of Austerlitz he
watched with interest and admiration the career of
the new Cæsar. The old ties with France, a power
too distant to have been ever dangerous, the recent
outrages from those who were now threatened, were
alike remembered; and as Napoleon, turning from the
1806 conquest of Austria, advanced towards his victories
over Prussia and Russia, Selim even prepared for an
alliance with the sovereign whose enemies were his
own, and whose successes might restore to him some
portion of the losses of preceding years.

It had indeed become necessary for him to seek an
ally. Disorders in his own provinces, disorders in his
capital, had rapidly diminished the strength of his
empire. The Wahabites, a sect of cruel and intolerant
fanatics, were now conquering Arabia for themselves;
the Mamelukes, a military caste that have ranked
worthily with the Strelitz or the Janissaries, were
already masters of Egypt; the Pasha of Syria was

throwing off his allegiance ; and the Servians, oppressed by the tyranny of Janissaries whom the Sultan could not curb, had risen in their own defence, and were learning in the struggle the path to independence. To crown these troubles, Russia was again imperiously demanding fresh concessions from the Porte. Not content with advocating the cause of Servia, she demanded to be constituted the protectress of the Greek Christians throughout the Empire ; and further, in view of her own approaching necessities, insisted upon an alliance offensive and defensive with the Porte. Selim wept with indignation, and prepared to defend his rights. He had now not only to coerce the rebellious Servians, but to defend the Principalities which were occupied by Russia after a declaration of war. For six years, and under three successive 1806-12 Sultans, a tedious and uninteresting struggle was prolonged. The Ottoman Empire was at its weakest ; its Sultans were deposed and murdered ; its capital was convulsed by strifes and dissensions. But the enemies of the Empire were weakened also. They could not withdraw their attention from the great events that were taking place in Europe, and their strength was paralysed. As it became evident that the whole might of France was to be directed upon Moscow, the Czar endeavoured to concentrate his whole strength to resist it. The necessities of Russia became the relief of the Porte. By the Peace of Bucharest in 1812 the Principalities were restored to 1812 her, and the abandonment of Bessarabia to the Czar, and the grant to the rebellious Servians of independence in the regulation of their internal affairs,

A.D. were concessions smaller than might have been expected on the part of the Sultan.

Selim III. had meanwhile been deposed in 1807, through an insurrection of the Janissaries who had feared his spirit of reform; Mustapha IV., an incapable sovereign, had fallen, after a year's rule, before the same power; and Mahmoud II. was now upon the throne. He knew that the excesses which had prepared his elevation might also procure his fall. In the tranquillity of the seraglio he had profited by the counsels of the deposed Selim; he had observed the insubordination of his Janissaries in the provinces, and their powerlessness to stand against the better training and discipline of the armies of the West; he saw, in fact, how formidable they were for evil, how useless for good; and their destruction became the object, and has ranked as the great achievement, of his reign. The years of peace that followed the great pacification of Europe were favourable to his design. He created a new corps of Topidjes, or gunners, who received the training of the West, and were destined to become the instruments in the destruction which he
1820 meditated. Neither a formidable contest with Ali
1821 Pasha of Jannina, nor the outbreak of the Greek insurrection, was allowed to interfere with his design.
1826 When he believed himself prepared the Sultan issued orders for the adoption by his Janissaries of reforms. They rebelled, as he had anticipated, and marched upon the seraglio. But Mahmoud was strong in the support of his ministers and of his new troops. The cannon of the Topidjes mowed down the advancing hosts; and, as the Janissaries retired dismayed

to the great square of the capital and the protection of their barracks, the same cannon poured forth its fury upon them and completed their destruction. Not a man was spared. Four thousand are said to have perished in Constantinople alone. The provinces took up the massacre; and soon not a Janissary remained throughout the Ottoman Empire.

The early years of the reign had seemed to give a glimpse of returning prosperity to the Porte. The Servians, tranquillized by the concession of autonomy, had become the peaceful tributaries of the Sultan; the turbulence of the Mamelukes was at an end, for they had all been treacherously murdered by Mehemet Ali, the Pasha of Egypt; and the Wahabites were being gradually coerced by the arms of the same ruler. Rebellion, however, like a conflagration that was to destroy the Empire, had hardly been extinguished in one place before it burst forth in another. The Pasha of Jannina for two years had resisted Mahmoud's arms. His example and his influence had inflamed the Greeks. A noble pride in their earlier history, a growing wealth and a growing power, which had been fostered through the commerce and the navigation which had been driven by the disturbances of Europe to Greek shores, had encouraged their hopes; and the spirit of liberty, evoked upon the banks of the Seine, had penetrated to those of the Ilissus. The resurrection of Greece, so long obscured under the deep cloud of servitude, was an event that interested the whole of Europe, and that affected deeply the Ottoman Empire. Secret societies had in a measure prepared the Greek nation. The support of Russia was relied

A.D. — upon. A rising of the Greeks in the Danubian Principalities was soon followed by an insurrection in the Morea; and the islands of Hydra, Spezzia, and Ipsara, which had long, through their commercial enterprise and importance, enjoyed a semi-independence, declared themselves to be free. The movement in the north was disavowed by the Emperor Alexander, and was crushed by the vigour of the Porte; but in the south the struggle which had been begun was continued with unfailing heroism through the long space of seven years, until it was rewarded by the interference and the support of Europe. The barbarities of the Ottomans imprinted from the first a bitterness upon the strife. The massacre of the patriarch and of many leading Greeks at Constantinople was followed by yet greater outrages. The deeds of blood at Smyrna and Cyprus, at Chios and Ipsara, attained a melancholy fame; and the Greeks, retaliating upon their persecutors, caused many a tale of horror to be spread throughout the continuance of the war. There were examples, however, of the noblest heroism, as well as of the cruellest barbarity. The courage of the Greek sailors, whose skill gave them often a superiority in the war, inflicted constant loss upon their enemy. The capture of the strong places of Tripolitza and Napoli di Romania, the heroic defence and the fearful fate of the inhabitants of Spezzia and Ipsara, won sympathy and admiration for the insurgents. An Ottoman army of 30,000 men, despatched to subdue the Morea, was gloriously repulsed, and compelled to evacuate the peninsula; and, had it not been that the Sultan was able to call to his aid the disciplined

armies and the ships of the Pasha of Egypt, the Greeks might of themselves have accomplished their deliverance. A.D. —

The strength of Egypt, however, when added to that of Constantinople, made the contest gradually seem 1825 hopeless. The Greeks had no resources to enable them to cope with their oppressors. Divisions appeared among themselves, and swords were even drawn against each other. There were still, however, no symptoms of submission to the Porte. The courage of the nation appeared to rise with its despair. Women as well as men united for the cause of freedom; and in the long-protracted defence of Missolonghi, and the heroism of its inhabitants, there was again presented before Europe the spectacle of a people preferring death to slavery. The reward of constancy at length appeared. The throne of Russia passed to Nicholas in 1825; England, inclined under a liberal ministry to aid a struggling people, united with the new Czar; France joined in the alliance; and the reconciliation of the Sultan with his rebellious subjects, upon the basis of their recognition as a vassal State, was 1826 determined on.

The cessation of strife was the first object. Mahmoud resented, and not unnaturally, all interference between himself and his subjects, and the Three Powers determined to enforce what they would have preferred to have seen conceded. Their fleet appeared in the bay of Navarino, where the Ottoman vessels lay. Some 1827 English boats, advancing, aroused suspicions and provoked a shot. A battle thus began. Of all the united strength of Constantinople and of Egypt there re-

A.D.

mained at the close of this disastrous day but a few small vessels. A blow had fallen upon the Porte complete and crushing; and the abandonment of the war in Greece became thenceforth a necessity.

The Sultan himself had destroyed his army, said the world, in allusion to his destruction of the Janissaries, and now his allies had destroyed his fleet. From without as well as from within, the Ottoman Empire was threatened. The tone of Russia, especially, had become formidable. No longer restrained by the scruples or the fears of Alexander, she had assumed a policy of aggression. Within a few months from the accession of Nicholas, in 1825, the Sultan had been called upon to sign the Convention of Akkerman, by which the relations of Servia and the Principalities had been defined in a manner most favourable to Russia, most unfavourable to the Porte. Now, within another twelvemonth, the Czar had aided to destroy the Ottoman fleet, and was demanding fresh concessions for the Greeks. But Mahmoud courageously refused to yield; and, seeing now that war with other enemies as well as with the Greeks was inevitable, preferred to be the first to declare it.

Asia as well as Europe felt the strife. Conquests which Nicholas had already made in Persia had opened to him a way into the Asiatic provinces of Turkey; 1828 and here, as well as upon the Danube, was the struggle waged. Mahmoud beheld his eastern Pashalics submit- 1829 ting to the invader. Erzeroum, the centre of his power in Asia, was taken. But his own attention and that of Europe was chiefly fixed upon the Danube, where the issues of the contest were to be decided. Bravely

the Ottoman forces withstood their enemies; and A.D.
their courage in the first campaign has made it doubt-
ful whether the losses of the Russians did not exceed 1828
their own. But in the second the fortresses of the
north successively were taken; and the Russian leader, 1829
Marshal Diebitsch, presuming upon the effect of his
successes and the weakness and disunion of his enemies,
began a march, which prudence could not justify, but
which success has rendered glorious. Leaving the
strong and still untaken camp of Schumla in his rear,
trusting, and not in vain, to the disaffection of the
Pashas of the north for his safety, he crossed the ranges
of the Balkan, and arrived with the shadow of an
army before Adrianople. The effect upon the Porte
was immediate. The Russian forces were closing round
Constantinople. Their ships were sailing upon the
Black Sea and the Mediterranean; and the Sultan
beheld, as he thought, his capital surrounded by an
irresistible foe. Mahmoud signed, with tears in his
eyes, the Treaty of Adrianople. He relinquished his 1829
undivided sovereignty over the mouths of the Danube,
and allowed the Russian frontier to advance so as to
include the Sulina mouth of the river. He ceded
several forts and districts around Poti upon the eastern
shore of the Black Sea, and recognized the claim of
Russia to many provinces of the Caucasus. He gave
to the Principalities an independence that was almost
complete,* reserving to himself only a nominal sove-

* Wallachia and Moldavia, which had at first been tributary countries, were made Ottoman governments for the first time in 1595. They were ruled by native governors till 1711, when the Sultans, by way of ensuring their authority, began to send Greek governors from Constantinople. This is the Fanariote period. In 1826 it was

A D. — reignty and a right to tribute; he made to Servia concessions almost as great; and he recognized the arrangements which had been entered into by the Three Powers for the erection of Greece into a separate State. The Peace of Adrianople was a most disastrous one, and one whose bitterness became intensified by the knowledge which subsequently came that its conclusion had not been a necessity. Had Mahmoud but refused to act, had he but allowed the remnant of the Russian army to perish by the wasting of disease that had already begun, he might have saved his provinces. But he knew neither the number nor the condition of the invaders; and, unhappily, he signed a peace when there should have been no peace.

Misfortune followed on misfortune. Algiers, which until now had been in nominal dependence on the 1830 Porte, was taken by the French in 1830, and the last remaining shadow of Ottoman sovereignty was effaced. The distant provinces were slipping from the hands that could not reach either to punish or to grasp them. Soon Egypt, formidable in a strength which she had gained by modelling her troops after the example of the West, rebelled, and even shook the throne of Constantinople. The quarrel with a Syrian Pasha was made the cause of war; and the successes of Ibrahim, the son of Mehemet Ali the Pasha of Egypt, gave all Syria and almost the whole of Asia Minor

stipulated by the Convention of Akkerman that native Hospodars should be elected to hold office seven years, and should be irremovable without the consent of Russia. In 1829, by the Treaty of Adrianople it was declared that the Hospodars should rule for life. Hammer, vi. 300. Creasy, "History of the Ottoman Turks," ii. 156, 415.

into his hands. After the battle of Konieh, near the ancient Iconium, the advance of the Egyptians was unchecked; and Mahmoud trembled for his capital and for his throne. England was appealed to, but in vain; and the Sultan, despairing of all help from friends, was constrained to seek it even from a foe. He threw himself into the arms of Russia. That Power, too conscious of the advantages that might be reaped from his necessities, responded eagerly to the appeal. To the dismay of Europe, Russian troops were seen advancing to the Bosphorus. Their presence had become a necessity; and diplomacy, however anxious, was unable to avert it. They stood between 1833 the Sultan and his rebellious vassal; they stayed the march of Ibrahim Pasha; and peace was made by the transfer of the governments of Syria and of Crete into the too powerful hands of Mehemet Ali. The gratitude of the Sultan was invited to reward the exertions of the Czar; and in the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, which united the two sovereigns in an alliance, and promised the closing of the Bosphorus against all Powers with whom Russia might be at war, the Emperor Nicholas found what he had sought.

Undismayed by the reverses he had met with, Mahmoud continued his reforms, and has earned through them the praise and the respect of his contemporaries. His reign, however, was not destined to be closed before another blow had been dealt to his authority. The still increasing and undisguised ambition of Mehemet Ali was again the cause of war; and the Sultan was compelled to attempt to check the

A.D. — presumption of his vassal. He saw, however, but the beginning of the strife. The desertion of his troops
1839 and of his fleet, the defeat by Ibrahim Pasha at Nezib, in a victory almost as complete as that of Konieh, were told to his successor. That successor found, however, that the Great Powers of Europe were at length aroused to the necessity of interference; and, at the price of confirming Egypt as a hereditary instead of a personal government to Mehemet Ali, the authority of the Sultan was re-established in Syria, and peace was restored.

1839 Abdul Medjid continued during the early years of his reign to carry out his father's reforms. Too conscious of the danger from the ambition of his pashas, Mahmoud had begun to restrict their powers, and had deprived them more particularly of the right of inflicting death. The confiscations which had enriched but had disgraced the Ottoman court had been also abolished, and a powerful temptation to crime had thus been removed. The new Sultan now gave his attention to the care of life and property, to the collection of the revenue, and to the army, which, after a system which has since been generally approved, was now divided into an active and a reserve force. There were attempts at opposition in the provinces to many of these reforms, but the energy of the Sultan suppressed them all, and the Ottoman Empire displayed a progress which called forth the approbation of the most civilized nations.

It was well that she thus strengthened herself. The designs of Russia were not abandoned; they were but postponed. The Emperor Nicholas had held forth

promises to England in 1844; he had seized upon the occasion of the disturbances of 1848 to occupy the Principalities, and had been surprised to find that his schemes were baulked by the firmness of the Sultan and the determination of England. He again held out temptations in 1853. The sick man was dying, 1853 he declared, and England might take Egypt and Crete for herself in the distribution of his inheritance. But again he met with no support; and obstinate for war, even under disappointment, he entered upon it alone.

There had been disputes concerning privileges at the Holy Sepulchre between the Greek and Latin monks; and in these the Czar beheld his opportunity. The disputes indeed were settled; but Nicholas demanded arrogantly that he should now be recognized as the protector of the Greek Christians throughout the Ottoman dominions, and when the Sultan refused, as his predecessors had done, to divide the allegiance of some thirteen millions of his subjects, the Russian armies occupied the Principalities as a guarantee for the fulfilment of their demands. For nearly a year, after the war began, the Sultan's forces withstood their enemy alone. They bravely fought upon the Danube; they even defeated the Russians, and repulsed them gloriously in the siege of Silistria. They saw at length their enemy retiring within his own frontier, and the neutral troops of Austria advancing to secure the debated territory; and had it not been for a deadly injury that the Sultan received, in the destruction of his fleet by the Russians in the bay of Sinope, he might have congratulated himself

A.D. — upon the object of the war being secured, and upon the glory of it being all his own.

But other Powers were now entering into the strife, and the ball had been set rolling. England and France had joined with the Ottoman Empire as allies; and the aroused enthusiasm of the people of one nation, and the dynastic ambition of the ruler of the other, made peace impossible. The power of Russia was to be humbled, that the kingdoms of the West might be exalted; and an enterprise that appeared at once most suited to the maritime nations, and most conducive to the future safety of the Sultan, was resolved on. Sebastopol, with its splendid harbour, its arsenals, and its fortifications, had been a standing menace to Constantinople. It was no longer to remain
1854 so. An allied army landed in 1854 upon the shores of the Crimea; the Russians were defeated at the Alma; they were defeated again under the heights of Inkerman; and the siege of the devoted fortress was formed.

During the war which the genius of the Russians and the wasted opportunities of the Allies prolonged, the Ottoman forces bore necessarily but a subordinate part. Their reputation, however, for courage was sustained; and, when the death of Nicholas and the successes of the Allies had prepared the way for peace, their cause was cordially pleaded by the Western
1856 Powers. At Paris, in 1856, a peace was signed which for the first time since the Treaty of the Pruth pushed back the Russian frontier. The protectorate of the Czar over the Principalities, so coveted by Russia, so dangerous for the Sultan, was abandoned; the

exclusive possession of the mouths of the Danube, to which Russia had advanced in 1829, was restored to the Porte; Sebastopol, it was declared, should remain a ruin; the waters of the Black Sea were neutralized; and the vessels of war which either Power might maintain upon it were limited to six. And so the sick man rested; revived after the contest in which one Power at least had thought that his life must have been lost.

Reforms were made the pledge by Abdul Medjid of gratitude and of returning strength. By a decree of 1856 the free exercise of all religions and the absolute equality of their professors was proclaimed. The great plea for Russian interference seemed thus removed; and, had the full extent of what was promised been performed, the State must have gained largely in the support of millions of conciliated subjects. But the despotism inherent and invincible in the Ottoman character made the promises of reform fruitless. There are many ordinances, says the Eastern proverb, at Constantinople as elsewhere, which last only from twelve to one o'clock. The Sultan and his ministers might recognize the need of toleration and of justice; they could not, however, enforce their practice throughout the wide extent of an imperfectly administered Empire. Abuses still continued, and 1861 the reign of Abdul Aziz, who succeeded to the throne in 1861, was but a perpetuation of them. The improvements of civilization, indeed, penetrated to Constantinople; the electric telegraph and the railway became known there; and a Sultan for the first time was a visitor at the courts of the West. But

A.D. the symptoms of decline were still apparent. Extravagance on the part of the sovereign was succeeded by debt; debt was succeeded by taxation and oppression, and finally by repudiation. The power of Russia
1870 began again to appear formidable. In 1870, during the war between France and Germany, she proclaimed her determination to be no longer bound by the stipulations of 1856, which had limited her fleet; and, the weakness of Europe compelling an assent, the determination was followed by a renewed construction of armaments which might threaten Constantinople. In the provinces, insurrections continued to occur, the fruit in a large degree of the oppression of the Mahomedan over the Christian population. The island of Crete rebelled in 1867; Bosnia and the Herzegovina in 1875. The increasing impotence of the Sultan to coerce his subjects, and the prospect of extending troubles among the frontier population, appeared again to justify the interference of foreign States; and Russia, Austria, and Germany united in collective representations to the Porte. The excitement at Constantinople increased. To the curse of misgovernment at home was now apparently about to be added humiliation at the hands of the infidels; and, by general consent of the populace and of the ministry, Abdul Aziz was deposed, and a new Sultan, who should restore in some degree the dignity of his country, was proclaimed.

1876 Amurath V., the son of Abdul Medjid, the eldest male of the House of Othman, was raised to the throne amidst the hopes of his people. He proved an incapable idiot. The Servians, impelled by the con-

tinuance of disturbances in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, took up arms ; the Montenegrins joined them ; and, while the flame of insurrection was thus spreading, the Sultan was unable, from the exhaustion of his faculties, even to understand the measures that were proposed to him. Within three months, his peaceful deposition, recalling that of Mustapha I., was ordered, and Abdul Hamid II., his brother, was proclaimed. The accession of a new sovereign, however, did not secure tranquillity. The Servians fought on for the attainment of their own independence, and were aided by Russian volunteers, who poured, to the number of many thousands, into their country. The Czar, believing perhaps that he had now an opportunity for the prosecution of the ancient policy of his race, protested against cruelties, which, upon the plea of the repression or prevention of insurrection, were said to have been committed. Horrors, occurring in Bulgaria, were made use of to persuade all Europe to join in remonstrance ; and a Conference, assembling in Constantinople, proclaimed the general wish for peace and the better government of the Christian provinces. Abdul Hamid stood alone before Europe ; but his great adversary stood alone also. While the Sultan, without admitting the right of foreign Powers to interfere in the administration of his dominions, declared his readiness to grant a new constitution and reforms to his people, the Czar beheld his co-remonstrants unwilling to exert a stronger pressure than that of moral influence upon the Porte. The cause of the Christians, the ancient cause, the cause which the Emperor had openly adopted, could

A.D. not now be allowed to drop. Again the Porte was
1877 assailed upon the ancient pretexts by its ancient enemy, and was called on to defend itself anew in a fresh crusade of Christian against Turk.

Bravely, as in its earlier days, the Porte prepared to meet its foes. The Ottoman armies already had gained honour by the repression of the Servian revolt; they were now to gain still more when measuring themselves against a more formidable foe. The Russian forces, advancing through both Europe and Asia, were met with an unexpected resistance. The Ottoman leaders were more determined, the Russian were less capable, than had been first supposed. The course of 1877 was a stubborn resistance on the part of the Sultan's armies. In Europe, though the passage of the Balkans was threatened, the Russians were held in check; and the defence of Plevna, which held back the invaders, became a memorable incident in the history of the war. In Asia, though Kars fell, there were not wanting successes to give lustre to the Ottoman arms. The exhaustion, however, of the more feeble before the stronger Empire was sure, and with the fall of Plevna the resistance of the Ottoman forces was virtually at an end. The Balkans were passed, the plains of Roumelia were traversed, Adrianople was entered, Constantinople itself was threatened. Again the Sultan and his ministers had no choice save to accept of peace; and the Treaty of San Stefano, which was signed within ten miles of Constantinople, marks the abandonment by the Ottoman Empire of itself to despair.

But the Powers of Europe, if inactive, had not been

inattentive spectators of the strife. In his extremity the Sultan would have submitted to the reduction of his Empire to a mere corner of Europe, and to the creation, under Russian auspices, of a vast principality of Bulgaria which should extend from the Euxine to the Ægean. The great cessions, that would have imperilled the interests of England and of Austria, were now opposed by these Empires; and the necessity for Russia to place the treaty, which she had framed in her own interests, before the bar of Europe, was distinctly asserted even at the risk of war. The more neutral Powers wished earnestly for peace, and again the Ottoman Empire reaped advantages from the jealousies that were excited by its great foe. In a Congress at Berlin, which the exhaustion and the needs of Russia compelled her to accept, a European treaty was substituted for the more private one between the Sultan and the Czar. To Russia were given the Asiatic territories of Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum; Bessarabia, the cession of 1856, was restored to her; Roumania was declared an independent State, and autonomy was secured for Bulgaria upon the north, and, in a less degree, for a new province which was to be known as Eastern Roumelia, upon the south of the Balkans. Greece, Montenegro, and Servia, were to receive additions of territory. Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the tranquillizing of their population, and for the security of Austrian interests, were to be occupied by Austria; and, by a separate treaty, the island of Cyprus was handed over conditionally to England, with the promise of definite reforms in Asia, as a counterpoise and check to the increasing influence of Russian power in

A.D. the East. The Empire of the Sultan fared better indeed at the hands of Europe than it had done at those of Russia alone ; but it could hardly be doubted that new and formidable progress in the work of disintegration had occurred. Again the vast arch of empire had been shaken, and had nodded to its fall.

From an aged and declining empire we pass to a young if not a rising kingdom. Greece, by the 1829 Treaty of Adrianople, had been virtually declared free. After the battle of Navarino, the Sultan had seen the inutility of continuing to attempt coercion. A French contingent of 15,000 men had compelled the withdrawal of the Egyptian forces and the surrender of the remaining places yet held within the Morea by the Ottomans. The Greeks themselves had extended their conquests and their desire for independence throughout Ætolia and Acarnania ; and their long struggle was rewarded in 1829, by the creation of a State which included all the country to the south of a line that was drawn from Arta on the Adriatic to the Gulf of Volo in the Archipelago, together with the islands of Eubæa and the Cyclades.

Two Chambers and a President were to administer the government. Count Capo d'Istria, a Greek who had filled the post of secretary to the Emperor Nicholas, and whose services to the cause of his nation's independence had been unceasing, was named for the Presidency. The authority, however, that he

exercised was brief. The influence of Russia, whose tool he was supposed to be, was regarded with jealousy, and he fell by an assassin's hand in 1831. Anarchy divided the country; and the presence of foreigners seemed required to rule a nation which knew not how to rule itself. By agreement between the Three Powers, the throne of Greece, erected into a kingdom, was offered to Otho, the second son of King Louis of Bavaria; and in 1833 the new sovereign landed to receive the crown.

A.D.

He came to a country whose inviolability was guaranteed by the Great Powers of Europe; and peace and a wise internal administration seemed all that was necessary to insure its prosperity. But the new King and his advisers had not the prudence to confine their attention to domestic matters. Their government was despotic and over centralized; they did not develop the local municipalities, which might have given order to a people just let loose from war, and they neglected agriculture, which would have given strength to the country. They aimed mistakenly at military power. The Greeks, who had stood forth the foremost among the Christian subjects of the Porte, were convinced that the Ottoman Empire was expiring, and that the succession to Constantinople must be theirs. The Great Idea, as it was called, of this inheritance, pervaded the nation, and infected the Government. Preparations for achieving it were continually being made. The opportunities which were presented by the rebellion of Mehemet Ali in 1841 and the movements of Russia in 1853 were made use of, and armed bands invaded the Ottoman provinces. The Ionian islands

A.D. murmured for annexation to a kingdom whose sympathies they shared ; and the whole nation fretted over hopes that were doomed to disappointment.

1843 A revolution in favour of liberal principles had occurred at Athens in 1843. The Bavarian soldiers, who had accompanied the King, had been dismissed ; and a constitutional government had been promised to the country. The promise, however, had been but imperfectly fulfilled ; and the continued failure of the national aspirations increased the dissatisfaction that arose against the Government. King Otho became a victim to the popular displeasure. In 1862 a revolt again broke out at Athens ; the maintenance of the royal authority was impossible ; and the King retired from his capital without attempting to defend it. Again the throne of Greece was to be disposed of ; and by an election, prompted by the protecting Powers, Prince William of Denmark, the second son of King Christian IX., was invited to occupy it.

The new King, who assumed the name of George, accepted a new Constitution, which gave to Greece a Cabinet government with a single Chamber and universal suffrage. He brought with him an offer, which was gratefully accepted, of the surrender of the protectorate of England over the Ionian islands, and of their annexation to the Greek kingdom. The weakness of the nation, however, its neglect of home for the pursuit of foreign politics, still continued. The taxation upon the produce of land was reduced, but the ancient system of collecting it in kind, which had survived the Ottoman dominion, and which paralysed agriculture, by placing the cultivation under the absolute dominion

of the tax-gatherer during the maturing and harvesting of his crops, continued. The aggressive spirit of the nation remained also unsubdued. Armed bands invaded Epirus and Thessaly, to return defeated, and to become brigands in their own country. The insurrection of Crete, in 1867, was believed to afford another opportunity of attacking the Porte; and volunteers, by thousands, hastened to support a rising, whose success might again snatch a province from the Sultan, and add one to their own kingdom. Disappointed in these hopes the people still kept looking forward to some future opportunities of gain; and when the insurrections in Bosnia and Herzegovina occurred in 1875, and were followed by the advance of Russian armies, they were hardly restrained from declaring war against the Porte. At last, at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, they saw some reward of their hopes. The partition of the Ottoman dominions was being made; and Greece, from her position rather than her claims, was admitted to share in it. Under the mediation of the European Powers her frontiers were now to be extended, and one-half of the provinces of Epirus and Thessaly were expected by the young kingdom. But even so there still arose the cry for more. Greece, however, had not risen through her own merits so much as through the misfortunes of her foes. She had not risen in honour before Europe as she had risen in extent, and she did not find the support for her demands which she had wished. To the patriots even, and to the enthusiasts, who had believed in her, she had been a disappointing kingdom, and she has herself felt the disappointment of her hopes. Buoyant in her young

A.D. ——— life of half a century ago, she had been expected, and had herself aspired, to exercise an influence and to be the regenerating power of the East. That hope, however, faded, and her prospects fell. She has been found incapable of leading, and the Christian populations that have chafed under the Porte have looked rather to Panslavism for their deliverance than to Panhellenism.

IV.
PORTUGAL.



PORTUGAL.

SUCCESSIVE conquests had already pushed back the dominion of the Moors, the Christian kingdoms which were to grow into the great monarchy of Spain had already become established, when, in the year 1094, Alfonso VI. of Castile determined to purchase or to reward the valour of a Burgundian knight by the gift of his daughter and the government of a province. Under the title of Count of Portugal, Henry, the great-grandson of King Robert of France, ruled over the country that stretches between the Minho and the Tagus. His widow and his son succeeded to his power. The times were favourable to the growth of independence. Castile, a prey to civil wars, could not enforce her claims; and Affonso, the son of Henry, was already virtually sovereign, when his subjects, exulting in a glorious victory at Ourique over the Moors, saluted him upon the field of battle as their King.

The formal constitution of the monarchy was at once settled. Assembled at Lamego, in the year 1143, the people confirmed the crown to Affonso himself and to his heirs, excepting such females as should marry

A.D. foreigners. A nobility was instituted, which included
 ——— all whose valour or whose freedom from the taint of Moorish or of Hebrew blood could be proved, and laws were passed for the restraint of crime within the new community. All thought of homage to Castile was rejected; but in the hope of securing a protector, and in consideration of its origin out of a holy war, the new kingdom was placed under the sovereignty of the Church, and Affonso submitted without humiliation to become the vassal of the Pope.

The House of Burgundy, which had now been
 143-1383 established, reigned over the country for 240 years. This period includes an age of war, in which continual conquests added to the kingdom until it had reached the limits that still bound it in the present day. It includes also an age, succeeding to that of war, of internal prosperity and progress. And its close, though chequered by misfortune, presents to us a country, relieved from the vicissitudes of youth, and already touching on the vigour of its manhood.

1128-85 The long reign of Affonso I., an almost uninterrupted period of war, is the most brilliant epoch in the history of the Portuguese conquests. Lisbon, which had already under its Moorish masters become the
 1147 chief city of the west, was taken in 1147, and became at once the capital of the new kingdom. The Tagus itself was soon passed. Large portions of the modern Estremadura and Alemtejo were permanently annexed. The distant provinces of Algarve and Andalucia were overrun; and even Seville trembled at the successes of the Portuguese. It was in vain that Moorish vessels sailed from Africa to chastise the presumption

of their Christian foes: their ships were routed off Lisbon by the vessels of Affonso; their armies were crushed by a victory at Santarem, the last, and perhaps the most glorious, of the many triumphs of the King. A.D. 1184

The means by which so rapid an extension of territory was made demand some notice. The kingdom sprang from what was in reality a Crusade. Its devotion to the Pope had added a new sanctity to its character. A warfare against infidels was of all warfares the most blessed; it was also the one not least attended by the prospect of individual gain. Men conquered from possessors whom it was a virtue to despoil; and, while they were extending the dominions of the Church, their own profits were not likely to be too keenly scrutinized. The courage of the pious, the covetousness of the profane, were alike appealed to. Templars and Hospitallers, Crusaders on their way to Palestine, assisted in what they deemed a holy war. The age of chivalry was not yet dead; and many adventurous knights, with no religion but their swords, arrived to swell the conquering ranks.

In a kingdom thus founded and thus enlarged the religious element became predominant. Every conquest saw the apportionment of lands to be held by military tenure among the conquerors; and the Church, which was here essentially a militant one, received not only an endowment for its religion but a reward for its sword. The Orders of St. Michael and of Avis which were founded had a religious as well as a military aspect. Their members were to be distinguished by their piety not less than by their courage, and were to

A.D. — emulate the older brotherhoods of Jerusalem and of Castile.

The reign of Affonso had embraced a period of seven and fifty years. They were years that are as glorious as any in the history of the country ; for they saw the firm establishment of independence and the rapid extension of a new kingdom. But they had been years of almost uninterrupted war. The ravages of Christian and of Moor had left their traces in the desolated fields and ruined cities that seemed to cry
 1185 for peace. Sancho I., though not adverse to military fame, endeavoured to repair his country's wounds ; and his reign, the complement of that of Affonso, was one of development rather than of conquest. He carried his arms indeed even to the southern ocean, and overran the whole province of Algarve.* But his surname of El Povoador, the Founder, is the indication of his greatest work. New towns and villages arose, new wealth and strength were given to
 1211 the rising country. Affonso II. continued what Sancho had begun ; and the enactment of laws, humane and wise, are a testimony of progress, and an honourable distinction to his reign. But already the kingdom was becoming divided within itself, and the growth of ambition and internal strife was threatening to paralyse its strength.

Large territories had become accumulated in the

* Algarve. From Al Gharb, the West. A name under which the Moors embraced not only the western extremity of Europe, but also that of Africa. Thence Sancho I., when he had conquered this province took the title of King of Algarve Aquem-Mar ; and Affonso V., with reference to his African conquests, added that of Alem-Mar. Hence Algarves.

hands of the church ; and the growth of independence, which through the necessities of the age had remained unchecked, had inspired the Portuguese prelates with an impatience of control. To the arrogance of a priesthood they had added much of the power of a military aristocracy ; and successive sovereigns now learnt to deplore the power which the ill-advised munificence of their ancestors had entrusted to them. It was an age when the claims of the church were being everywhere asserted. Interdict and excommunication were being launched by Innocent III. against the sovereigns of the greatest realms of Europe ; and the Popes, who had been made the feudal as well as the ecclesiastical superiors of Portugal, were not likely to relax their claims within a kingdom specially their own. Sancho I. had been the earliest to perceive that there was danger in the growth of such power ; and an attempt to restrain the independence of the bishop of Oporto, a prelate whose successors were to acquire an unhappy prominence in these disputes, had drawn down upon him the threats of excommunication and of interdict from Rome. Affonso II. now actually experienced what his father had been threatened with. The archbishop of Braga, the primate of Portugal, declared that the rights of the church were invaded, that its privileges were violated, and that its estates were plundered ; and, carrying the tale of his wrongs to Rome, he procured from Honorius III. a sentence of excommunication, which was sufficiently effectual to weigh upon Affonso during life, and to deprive him of the rites of burial after death. The divisions and the weakness which

- A.D. — were caused by the contest between the royal and the ecclesiastical authority brought misery upon the kingdom. The reign of Sancho II. was more fatally influenced by them even than that of his father. The childlessness of the King, the intrigues for his expected succession, the baneful influence of a mistress, all aided the work of opposition. The now familiar terrors of excommunication and interdict were followed by a sentence of deposition from Innocent IV. ; and Sancho, weak in character, and powerless before a hostile priesthood and a disaffected people, retired to end his days in a cloister of Castile.
- 1246 The successor to Sancho was Affonso III. He had intrigued for his brother's crown ; he had received the support of the priesthood, and he had promised them their reward in the extension of their privileges. But there was a difference between a King who had lost and one who was daily gaining the affections of his subjects. The name of Affonso became honoured and beloved. The career of conquest, not suspended, but abated, during the preceding reigns, was revived. The province of Algarve, which had been conquered but not held by Sancho I., was now subdued ; and after a struggle, followed by long negotiation, with Castile, which was already becoming jealous of the Portuguese conquests, was annexed for ever to the kingdom. A wise and popular administration added strength to the crown ; and the clergy found that their monarch was less careful than they had expected in the advancement of their interests. The old complaints were reiterated : that the property of the church was plundered ; that clerks, in contravention of

their privileges, were summoned before lay tribunals; and again the threats of excommunication and of interdict went forth from Rome. Affonso did not lose his crown, nor did he die out of communion with his church; but the power of the clergy was again displayed and gratified by the humble submission which he made upon his death-bed and by the desire he then expressed to observe unconditionally all the commands of the Pope. 1279

The first period of the history of Portugal is now closed. Up to this time, each reign, disturbed and enfeebled though it may have been, had added something to the extent of the country. But now the last conquest from the Moors had been won. On the south, the impassable barrier of the ocean; on the east, the dominions of Castile, confined the kingdom. The two powers, the Moorish and the Christian, were now no longer brought into collision; and the crusading days were over. An age of internal progress now succeeds to one of war. The claims of prelates, the rude violence of nobles, receive a check; and the rise of the commons, the true sinews of a country, begins.

The reign of Denis, who ruled from 1279 to 1325, is at once the parallel to that of Affonso I. in its duration and importance, the contrast to it in being a period of internal progress instead of foreign conquest. To a kingdom scarred by the wars that had originated it was now applied the healing hand of peace; to the sword succeeded the plough-share. Agriculture, the life, as the new sovereign called it, of a country, received especial care; and the surname of the Labourer, which was given to him, has preserved the remem-

A.D.

brance of his interest in the soil. Lands were apportioned for cultivation by the poor, who learnt to look upon the sovereign as their benefactor; and, where the soil seemed little fitted to repay their care, there were forests planted, to become a source of strength as yet undreamt of to future generations. There were other subjects which in turn received attention. Successive journeys made the King acquainted with the condition and the needs of every province, and his discriminating care was felt in all. The prosperity of the towns, and the peopling of the rural districts, was encouraged; and a new source of wealth was found in the re-opening of the ancient mines of the country. The fleet, which had already signalized itself against the Moors, and which was hereafter to spread the fame of Portugal to every sea, received attention, and developed under the instructions and the command of the Genoese sailors. And finally, that the kingdom might not only be a working but a lettered
1308 one, the university of Coimbra was founded, and took its place by the side of that of Salamanca.

In Denis the people found a father, the clergy and the nobles a master. The power of the two great orders had threatened the country. The clergy had already triumphed over the crown; and now the increasing accumulation of land in mortmain, and its consequent withdrawal from many of the burdens of the State, was adding seriously to the responsibilities, and thereby provoking the hostility, of other proprietors. The nobles, though without the organization of ecclesiastics, and without the aid of so powerful a protector as the Pope, had acquired an equally

dangerous independence. They were at once the oppressors of the poor, and the plunderers of the church; and they were aiming by constant and specious pretexts at the extension of their power. Denis did not attempt by sweeping measures to transform everything; but he adopted the safer policy of providing against the increase of existing abuses. While the clergy found that their acquisitions were to be restricted, their hostility was disarmed by the protection that was at the same time secured to them in what they already actually possessed; and while the nobles saw that their encroachments were restrained, by a decree which refused to recognize their claims in the future, they were reconciled by the confirmation to them of all that they had acquired up to the limit of a recent date. That Denis should have been able to accomplish as much as he did, was the wonder even of his own age; the secret, however, is to be found in the wisdom with which he held the balance between the different orders of his realm, in the equal justice which he extended to all, and in the support of a grateful populace, who, recognizing the need of reform and the integrity of the reformer, gave him a strength which had been unknown to earlier kings.

Successive reigns still found the country progressing. Affonso IV. and Pedro I. were not great kings; but 1325 the reign of the first was marked by a glorious victory at Rio Salado, which was won by the united forces of 1340 Portugal and of Castile, over an invading army of the Moors; and that of the second derives some lustre 1356 from the strict administration of justice which gave to

A.D. — the King the surname of the Justiciary or the Severe. Both sovereigns increased the prosperity of the country and added to the contentment of their people. The strong towers in which the kings of Portugal had been accustomed to hoard their wealth had never been so full, the harbour of Lisbon had never been so crowded with the ships of foreign nations, the rights of the people had never received so much respect.

The rise of the popular element may here be traced by a glance at the history of the Cortes. The first assembly at Lamego had been followed by other meetings in which the nobles and the clergy had acted as the Great Council and advisers of the sovereign. They had not met at stated times, but only as circumstances had arisen which made their advice needful. Thus Affonso II. had called them together in 1211, the first year of his reign, to consult them with reference to his legislation; Affonso III. had summoned them in 1254 and 1273 on matters of religion and of trade; and under succeeding sovereigns their meetings had been more frequent, and the subjects for their discussion had been multiplied. In the earlier assemblies, the condition of the people, if considered at all, had been a matter for private deliberation among the lords and clergy. The first step was to allow the popular representatives to be present at these discussions; the next was to give these freedom of speech upon their own affairs; and gradually, as the importance of the towns increased, the right of the representatives to be heard on other matters than those affecting their own immediate interests became admitted, and municipal charters gave permanently the right to representation.

The constitution of the Cortes was thus established; but its functions remained undefined. As yet there had been no collision between its own wishes and those of the sovereign; but in the weakness of the reign of Fernando, who ruled from 1367 to 1383, disputes began to arise, and while the King maintained that all legislation was vested in the crown, and that the Cortes were a mere consultative body, he was met by demands on its behalf that would not have disgraced even the independence of an English parliament three centuries later.

The progress of two centuries and a half had done much in the development of the kingdom; but the rule of Fernando, the last sovereign of the House of Burgundy, seemed likely to undo the work of his predecessors. The murder of King Pedro of Castile, by his brother Henry Count of Trastamare, and the succession of the murderer to his throne, gave the first pretext for a war with Castile, which the prudence of former sovereigns had been careful to avoid, but which the folly of Fernando not only invited but twice again renewed. The advance of his enemy up to the gates of Lisbon, and the destruction of the Portuguese fleet, were among the incidents of these wars. The English allies, whom he invited to assist him, were mere plunderers and robbers. The impoverishment of the country, the debasement of the coinage, and a wide-spread misery followed. The evil influence of the Queen, Leonora Tellez, a woman who had paved her way to the throne by her dishonour, and who remained unscrupulous and even criminal in the exercise of her power, completed the misfortunes

A.D. of the country. The whole reign of Fernando was a
1383 course of disaster, and at his death in 1383 he bequeathed to his exhausted country the further evil of a disputed succession.

Out of weakness, however, there sprang strength. The glorious assertion of national courage and independence, the establishment of a dynasty that was to be more illustrious even than that of Burgundy, were to form the history of the next few years.

The only child of King Fernando, the princess Beatrix, after having been offered as a bribe during her father's reign to every prince whom his caprices made him anxious to conciliate, had at last been married to a former enemy, but to a powerful protector, King Juan I. of Castile; and the succession to the throne of Portugal, notwithstanding the settlement of Lamego, had been promised by treaties to her children. There were still two brothers of Fernando, John and Denis, who might be formidable competitors for the crown; but, exiles from Portugal, they had become refugees in Castile, and were now by the policy of King Juan detained there as state prisoners. Meanwhile the Queen-dowager, Leonor, had assumed the regency in Portugal for her child.

A little tact might have secured the succession for Beatrix or her children; the want of it gave the kingdom to one who had absolutely no claim at all. The Portuguese were still under the influence of the animosities of recent war; their pride was insulted by the hasty proclamation of Juan and Beatrix as sovereigns of the kingdom; the government of the Queen-dowager was distasteful to them; and a national party soon appeared with a national leader at its head.

Dom John, Grand Master of the Order of Avis, from which his dynasty has taken its name, was a son, but an illegitimate one, of King Pedro the Severe, and by his station was one of the foremost subjects of the realm. He now took upon himself to rid the country of an obnoxious paramour of the queen, and by his act proclaimed himself the champion of the people. By prudence and wisdom he added largely to his popularity. He received the title of Defender of the Kingdom; and professing that he only governed for John his half-brother, the prisoner in Castile, he conciliated many adherents. During the year 1384 he directed every operation against the King of Castile, who had entered Portugal with the determination to enforce his claims. He could not save wide districts from falling into the power of the invader, and he had to behold the capital itself submitting to the horrors of a protracted siege; but while the conduct of the King of Castile was repelling adherents, that of Dom John was conciliating them. He was the representative of the nation against foreigners, the prospect of whose yoke was every day becoming more detestable. The legitimate brothers of Fernando were prisoners, and powerless in the cause of their country; and, at the beginning of 1385, the Cortes met at Coimbra, with the expressed intention of deliberating upon the election of Dom John as their King.

The prominence of the Grand Master had been distinctly due to the affection of the people and not to that of the other orders. The nobles had stood aloof from him, and had only been constrained to assent to much that had been done by the unmistakable

A.D. — determination of the popular will. His influence, however, had now become strengthened; but, though it was represented that the claims of Beatrix and of the prisoners in Castile were barred by the fact that they had at one period or another taken up arms against their country, there were still many who hesitated to proclaim him King, while the legitimate descendants of King Pedro were alive; and in this hesitation the adherents of Dom John, through their eagerness to secure his election, determined to resort to fraud.

The mother of the imprisoned sons of Pedro had been Inez de Castro. The reputed mistress of Pedro
1355 while she lived, she had been cruelly slain by the orders and almost in the presence of Affonso IV.; and though Pedro, upon his accession to the throne, had hastened to proclaim the legitimacy of his marriage with her and of his children, there had still been persons who had hesitated to believe in his proofs. It was now determined to profit by these doubts. Letters, which purported to have been written by the Pope, refusing to legitimate the marriage, were produced: their effect upon the popular mind was instantaneous; all scruples appeared to vanish; and the Grand Master was unanimously proclaimed King.

1385 The "Royal" battle of Aljubarrota, which was fought a few months later, secured the crown to King John I. The most important battle, as it has been called, that has ever taken place between the Christian nations of the Peninsula, it assured the independence of Portugal, and dealt a most disastrous blow to the power of Castile. The enemies of the Portuguese

were broken; the flower of their chivalry was destroyed; and though pride, for long years, refused to abandon its pretensions and to accept of peace, the apprehension of all danger was finally removed.

A long series of uninteresting hostilities, of truces and negotiations, followed. An alliance with England, and the marriage of King John to Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt, belong to this time. The English prince was still aspiring to the throne of Castile; but the want of troops, and the unwillingness of King John to waste the strength of his exhausted kingdom in the cause of his father-in-law, precluded any great result; and the marriage of Catherine, the younger sister of Philippa, to the Prince of the Asturias, soon caused the interference of the English in the affairs of the peninsula to cease. The reconciliation, however, of Portugal and Castile was still long in coming; and a final peace was not secured till 1411, when the King of Castile at length engaged to cease from aiding in any schemes against the throne of his enemy.

The continuance of these hostilities had absorbed the attention both of sovereign and people. The close allowed the opportunity of turning to new considerations. The sons of John were growing up; their ardour burned to signalize itself in the pursuit of glory; Castile was closed to their ambition; but Africa was near; and they urged successfully before their father the desire for a war which might at once achieve the glories of conquest and have the sanctity of a crusade. Ceuta, the most important town of Morocco, the harbour from which successive expeditions had sailed against the Portuguese, became the object of attack;

A.D. and for the first time the Moors were made to feel
1415 that the ravages of war which they had carried into
Christendom were being retaliated upon their own
shores. The fall of the city, a blow disastrous to the
Moors, was an achievement full of consequences for the
Portuguese. The gate of Africa was now opened; the
Christian armies might at will pass over to its soil;
and new motives began to suggest themselves for the
exploration of the vast continent, which might now,
by a happy course of conquest and discovery, become
Portuguese.

The dawn of a mighty empire for Portugal was at hand; but its sun was not rising in the quarter to which men looked for it. One man alone appears to have foreseen the true direction of his country's greatness. Prince Henry, the third son of King John, to be known hereafter as the Navigator, applied himself at once to the work of discovery. Not barren victories upon barren sands, not triumphs only upon African deserts, but the search for unknown kingdoms, that lay beyond strange seas, became his object. Ambition and faith alike encouraged him. New conquests and new converts awaited his success; new glory on earth, a higher glory still in heaven. His name is still among the foremost in the annals of his country. To him was owing the vast empire which the next century beheld; and if the flag of Portugal was found to wave over the coasts and waters of Asia, of Africa, and of America, it was borne thither by the men who had learnt their art in the school and from the guidance of the great Navigator.

Returning from Ceuta with new knowledge and

new hopes, Prince Henry bent himself at once to his task. At Sagres, upon the desert rocks of Cape St. Vincent, at the extremest verge of Europe, he built observatories for himself, and a college of instruction for his sailors, where the science of the day was taught and where the knowledge of the compass received its development. From this point, that looked out towards those seas whose hidden realms he hoped to find, the Prince sent forth his vessels; and here, as they returned, he welcomed them, the first to hear their tidings of success. The devotion of his life had its rewards; though these rewards perhaps were not as great as he had hoped. If the progress of discovery was sure it was also slow. New perils had to be encountered, old prejudices to be overcome. But perseverance bore at length its fruit; and the way was opened for that empire, which it was reserved for others to complete, but which Prince Henry alone appears to have already anticipated.

The first voyage was made in 1418. A solitary 1418 vessel started to explore those coasts which, running southward from Tangier, had still remained unknown. It was driven by a storm to the as yet undiscovered island of Puerto Santo. Madeira was faintly within sight, and the next year was visited by the same explorers. About 1431 the Azores were reached, and 1431 a long step had thus been taken in the direction of the New World. But the fabled horseman in bronze, which is said to have been found, pointed in vain across the Atlantic. The discoverers turned eastward, and preferred to follow up the clue which the shores of Africa had given, rather than to tempt an ocean

A.D. — which might prove to be shoreless. As yet Cape Bojador had been the most southern point upon the maps of Africa. To pass it was the first object. But the terror of its storms, the superstitious fear of what might be beyond, and the tales of those who had turned it, but who had gone, so far as could be known, direct from thence into another world, had combined to give it a character that was full of awe and mystery. Brave and unselfish indeed appeared the hearts of those who determined to gaze upon the regions beyond, and to pass by the easy riches of the nearer coast. No less than thirteen times the ships returned, having yielded to the fear or covetousness which delayed their success; but again the attempt
1439 was made, and the veil of ignorance and of superstition was at length removed. Men learnt that the southern coasts and their inhabitants were of no different character from what they had already known. New confidence was felt, new enterprise was encouraged. Cape Blanco and Cape Verde were in turn passed. And though Prince Henry himself did not live to see more, he had the satisfaction of knowing that, by a Bull obtained from Pope Eugenius IV., his countrymen would be confirmed in the possession of all their future discoveries.*

* One consequence of these discoveries was the slave trade, which Portugal has the melancholy fame of having originated. The first slaves were brought to Lisbon in 1442. In 1444 an association was formed for their importation, and by the end of the century the Portuguese began to supply other nations. In 1517 regulations for their importation to the Spanish colonies were framed, the result of the well-meant but mistaken advice of Las Casas, who wished to relieve the more delicate Indians. In later times the necessity for labour in Brazil gave a further impulse; and Africa and America thus mutually influenced each other.

We do not measure the time or criticise the length of these early voyages. It is enough to reflect upon the means with which they were undertaken, and on the days of ignorance and prejudice in which they were carried out. Portugal was still a weak and an unsettled kingdom, with internal strife and foreign wars, the remnant of feudal and crusading ages. During the life of Prince Henry the war in Africa had been continued. The short reign of Duarte, who had succeeded to John I. in 1433, had been memorable for a disastrous expedition in which the loss of Ceuta had only been avoided by the abandonment to captivity and death of the brother of the King. The minority of Affonso V. was disturbed by the intrigues and jealousies of rival factions, who attempted too successfully to withdraw the King from the wise influence of the regent, his uncle Pedro. His manhood was spent in profitless and exhausting wars. His conquests in Africa, avenging, as he fondly deemed, the capture of Constantinople, gave him some glory and the surname of "The African," but added nothing to the strength of his kingdom. An attempt to secure the throne of Castile, by a marriage with Juana, the daughter of Henry IV. of Castile, led to war, in which he was opposed by the stronger claims and the more powerful arms of Ferdinand and Isabella. The battle of Toro in 1476 was a blow from which he never recovered. Betaking himself to France, he sought in person for the aid of Louis XI., whose hopes of Roussillon might have induced him to take up the war; and returning to Portugal, disappointed in his hopes, he despairingly abandoned the govern-

A.D. ment to his son John, and died while preparing by
— a formal abdication to exchange the burden of royalty
for the retirement of a cloister.

The changes of the time had altered Europe. She
was no longer the vast agglomeration of rude king-
doms, whose sovereigns did but repeat among them-
selves the wars and passions of their vassals. The
nations with fixed limits had assumed fixed policies,
and appeared to have tacitly agreed among themselves
to follow the pursuit of strength at home, rather than
to continue searching for it among the spoils of their
1481 neighbours. John II. was not indifferent to the spirit
of his age; and his reign has ranked him not un-
worthily among his great contemporaries. By his side
he saw the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon united;
and their consolidation was a warning to him to make
the most of his own strength. During his father's life
he had renounced all prosecutions of Juana's claims;
and he now, by the marriage of an only and too short
lived son with Isabella, the daughter of the Catholic
sovereigns, gave proof of his wish for friendship with
the Spanish nation. He studied at the same time to
secure peace at home. Under Affonso V., the power
of the nobles had again risen. The firmer character of
John repressed the dangerous growth. "I have seen a
king who governs all, and who is governed by none,"
said the ambassador of Henry VIII. of England. The
Duke of Braganza, to the terror of his peers, who
foresaw in his sacrifice their own fate, was tried for
conspiracy against the King and executed. The Duke
of Viseu, the Queen's brother, was stabbed in the
palace by the King's own hand, an act which seems

to lead us back to darker ages than the end of the 15th century. There was much indeed of the sternness of Pedro the Severe in John's character, but there was much of his justice also; and the populace, who beheld in their sovereign a champion against their oppressors, and saw that all were equal before the law, delighted to honour him with the name of the Perfect King. A.D.

Wars in Africa have marked, and not ingloriously, the pages of this reign; but the true centre of its interest and of its greatness are the exploits of its navigators. The peace at home could give a better prospect of success; and, from the moment that explorers found that the coast of Africa receded towards the east, the hopes and the attempts to find a way round the continent had increased. The kingdoms of Guinea, of Benin, and of Congo, were successively discovered, and their rich spoils of ivory and gold brought home. The Cape itself was reached 1486 by Bartolomeo Diaz in 1486, and the northern direction of the coast appeared to justify the hopeful anticipations of its name. But, great as was this progress, they had not yet found the Indies; they were still only creeping along the shores of Africa; and when, in 1493, Columbus returned with his great tidings, it 1493 seemed as though a new empire were rising to outstrip themselves, and that they must hasten to secure their own pre-eminence.

John did not live to see the full discoveries for which he had longed, but anticipating the Castilian rivalry he secured, under the Papal mediation, the Treaty of Tordesillas, which gave all that should be 1494

A.D. — discovered eastward of a line drawn at a distance of 370 leagues from the Azores to Portugal, reserving only the discoveries beyond that line to Spain. His cousin and successor, Emmanuel, continued the same designs; and the name of Fortunate, which has been given him, is a proof that he was not disappointed. Already Pero de Covilham had made his way through Egypt as far as Aden, and embarking on the Indian Sea had beheld the cities of Goa and Calicut, and had sailed southward as far as Sofala low down upon the African coast. That the route from the Cape existed appeared therefore certain, and a bold navigator only was required to demonstrate it by experience. John II. had already chosen Vasco
1497 da Gama for the task; and, Emmanuel assenting to the design, the fleet set sail on the 7th of July, 1497. Within a year success had crowned the enterprise. The Cape of Good Hope was safely passed; and on
1498 the 20th May, 1498, the Portuguese had landed for the first time on the coast of Malabar.

The rise of an empire, which in its extent was the precursor of our own, and in its time excited an even greater admiration, must claim the sympathies of Englishmen. It is, moreover, in this foreign empire that we have to seek during nearly a hundred years the events which constitute the history of the Portuguese nation; for the wisdom of successive kings disposed them to prefer the uneventfulness of peace at home during the progress of their foreign conquests. Isolated from Europe by the strong barrier of Spain, which confined while it protected the Portuguese frontiers, the kingdom could only hope for aggrandise-

ment upon the seas; and it studied therefore to preserve the friendship of the one Power at home with which it was brought in contact. John II. had attempted by marriage to cement an alliance with Spain; and during the reigns of Emmanuel and John III. six instances at least occur of union between the houses of Castile and Portugal. Hereafter questions of succession might arise; but the immediate object was secured; and the tranquillity of the West allowed the prosecution of those efforts which were to bring wealth and power from the East.

Vasco da Gama beheld upon his arrival a country 1498 divided into petty sovereignties, and with its trade monopolized by the Mahomedan inhabitants of the coasts of Persia and Arabia, whose ships had long sailed undisturbed over the Indian seas, and had been accustomed to convey to Egypt the precious freights which were thence distributed through Europe by the vessels and for the profit of the Italian republics. He was viewed himself as an intruder, and was denounced as a pirate. Conciliation might have overcome hostility, but the pride of the native chief was wounded by the omission of the customary presents, his confidence was lost through the ill faith which prompted the Portuguese to decline surrendering some hostages whom they had seized, and the first expedition returned with little but the news of its discoveries, and having left already an ill name behind it.

A second expedition in the following year set out 1500 under Cabral, who has the fame of having been the discoverer of Brazil, towards which he was accidentally driven by a storm. The absorbing interest of the

A.D.
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A.D. — Indies, however, caused him to pass on, after sending news of his discovery to Portugal; and he arrived at Calicut to find the Arab influence still predominant against him. A step, however, was now made towards dominion in the advantage that was taken of the jealousies among the petty princes that divided the coast, and an alliance with the neighbouring sovereigns of Cochin and Cananor, was soon found to be the surest help towards the establishment of power. From this time the policy of Portugal became one of mildness to her allies, but of terror to those that withstood her will. The ferocity of conquest was begun. Tales of barbarity along the African coast, of the remorseless burning of an Arab vessel and her crew, soon came as a warning of the second approach of Vasco da Gama. Timidity secured for him alliances; and the fall of the still hostile chief, whose fleet was lost, while he himself was compelled to exchange his throne for the harmless exercises of his religion, became a warning to respect or at least to fear the power of the invaders.

While Asia beheld the Portuguese successes with wonder and alarm, the mind of Europe also was troubled. The Republics of Italy foresaw that though the course round Africa was long, yet all the Western marts of Europe would now be supplied with the produce of Asia direct from her own shores, and unburdened by the expense of many carriers. The loss of these markets to the Italians was therefore certain. But they also foresaw that Portugal would hardly be content with these alone, and that, could she sweep her rivals from the seas, the whole supply

of Europe would pass into her hands, and the Eastern trade of Italy would be ended. Their interests therefore were now united with those of Egypt and Arabia; and they are found, as history progresses, appealing to the Sultans of Constantinople to defend the Indian seas. They were unable, however, to attain their end. It had become the interest of Portugal to clear those waters of all vessels except her own, and she was able to provide by her settlements along the coast against any attempts to re-divert the traffic.

The vice-royalty of Affonso Albuquerque marks the 1506 accomplishment of the Portuguese designs. It is to him that the nation owed the establishment of her sole power from the Straits of Bab el Mandeb to the China seas, and it is his life which Camoens has sung as the most glorious epic for his nation. Sailing in 1506 he was the first to discover Madagascar; but it 1506 did not delay his voyage to the Indian coast. In 1507 he reached the island of Socotra; and by a for- 1507 tification upon it, intended to command the entrance of the Red Sea, proclaimed the inauguration of a policy which was to be the exclusion of all competitors. The capture of Ormuz upon the Persian Gulf had a similar design. The channels of the overland communication with Europe were to be closed; and the fleets of the Ottoman Sultans, and the trade which they encouraged, were to give place to the argosies of Portugal.

Intrigues among his own countrymen, and the prospect of a yet greater domination than any he could secure near Persia, compelled the abandonment by Albuquerque of Ormuz, and for a time it reverted

A.D. — to its old masters. The presence of the viceroy was needed upon the coast of Malabar. A suppliant prince, dethroned, was pleading for protection. His capital was now conquered in his name, and was retained by
1510 his allies for their own benefit. Goa, the centre of the Portuguese power, was thus won. Her situation, her strength, her harbours, so favourable and so capacious, made her at once the metropolis of trade; and Albuquerque, adding to her strength, poured the riches of the East into her warehouses, until she became known as the Golden City. From this point the settlements which had extended and were still extending along the coast could receive support; and the natives, as they beheld, were taught to tremble. Ambition prompted further conquests. The coast of Malacca was not more distant than Goa itself had been from Africa; and tales had come of riches that would exceed even those of Malabar. A pretext was soon found for war; and an expedition, under the great viceroy himself, set sail to attack the settlements of the Malays. Their fury, still proverbial, prolonged the strife. Their eventual submission, however, opened the multitudinous islands and seas around them to the Portuguese commerce, and gave a lesson to the neighbouring princes, who now sought alliances with the power which they would have crushed had they not already learnt to fear.

1575 It only remained to reconquer the command over the Persian Gulf; and the recovery of Ormuz in 1575 gave a final security to the Portuguese power. An attempt on Aden indeed had failed; but the island of Socotra still guarded the Red Sea; and the hopes of

Venice and of Egypt were now abandoned before a power which monopolized for 6000 miles the Asiatic coast. The settlements which had been made were not extensive, but they were numerous and they were strong. Forts had arisen everywhere. Their establishment had been made the price of alliances, and they became the security of commerce and the armed perpetuators of peace. The man who had done these things, who within eight years had created for his sovereign an empire that stretched over more than half of the then known globe, was Albuquerque. It is sad, however, to have now to record that his life was closed before he had enjoyed his fame, and that ¹⁵¹⁵ he died with the bitterness of having been distrusted by his sovereign, who had listened to the envy which had whispered that such greatness was either too much or too little for a subject.

It is to the credit of Emmanuel, however, that he perceived and acknowledged his mistake, and gave a tardy reparation to the dead in the favours which he bestowed upon the son of the great viceroy, who was living. Emmanuel saw and appreciated the importance of the vast empire, which, however distant, would give to his kingdom an importance in Europe unattainable by other Powers; and it is to the realization of this fact, and to the exclusive care which was bestowed upon the one object of Asiatic empire, that is to be attributed the success which has made him known as "the Fortunate." Fortunate indeed he was, to whom a new world was opened, and its riches laid by worthy subjects before his feet; and Fortunate did he appear to have been to his successors, when

A.D. — they found the wealth, which he had held, gone from them, and their empire but a barren name, of which the fruits were lost in the struggles and the avarice of corrupt lieutenants.

Twenty years alone are said to have been the brief period during which the Indies brought a revenue to the crown of Portugal. New viceroys succeeded to each other, but they had no longer the spirit of Albuquerque or his success. With him had passed the energy of the first discoverers, and the cautious wisdom which had belonged to men who knew not what they might be called upon to meet. Self confidence had engendered licence and extortion, to be followed in their turn by rebellion; and while every man was aiming at becoming rich the expenses of government were multiplied. On every side revolt arose; and the whole dominion, which had so lately been acquired, appeared already about to slip from the hands that 1524 could not grasp it. In 1524 Vasco da Gama was again sent forth to attempt the re-establishment of power among the countries which his discoveries had opened; and in the rapid improvement of affairs was found the justification of such a choice. But his death within the year was the signal for relapse; and among his successors, for another twenty years, there is hardly a man that deserves remembrance. Power indeed was extended; triumphs were still gained; the distant empires of China and Japan were made to yield their commerce and their mineral wealth; the great city of 1531 Diu was taken in 1531, and the fleet of Solyman the Magnificent was compelled to retire without achieving its relief. But this power was still without foundation;

and its very growth was spreading with it the seeds of its decline. A.D.

The vast extent of their dominion was of itself fatal to the Portuguese ; for they had not made the country in reality their own, they were but the occupiers of a long chain of scattered forts, the armed coercers of a hostile country. Their dominion had been built up by crimes and treachery, which had made them odious to the surrounding nations ; and, despising the religions they had found, they had enforced upon a sensitive people the adoption of a new faith, with no examples but those of the sword to recommend it. In later years the viceroys, whose office lasted only for three years, were continually engaged in sailing from point to point upon a long-drawn line to defend their possessions. They had no time to carry out great policies ; they believed that they had hardly time sufficient to enrich themselves. Selfishness and avarice, luxury and effeminacy, became quickly the characteristics of Asiatic government ; and it was no marvel that the power passed from men who were but little fitted to retain it.

The government of John de Castro, which dates 1545 from 1545 to 1548, is a bright epoch that for a time arrested the decline. Jealous of his country's fame he won for it respect by the strict administration of justice and by his vigour in war. "The Portuguese," he said to the nations, "are like the ocean, that rises with the storms ;" and, fulfilling his metaphor, he won back the city of Diu, which had been momentarily lost, and struck terror among those who had meditated rebellion. With him had come the Apostle of the

A.D. Indies, St. Francis Xavier; and his teachings, milder
— than those which had preceded them, combined to
reconcile the natives towards a power which they
could now respect as well as fear. But these days
1548 were brief; and the great viceroy died in 1548, leaving
the final proof of his integrity in his poverty. From
this time the empire wasted. The establishment of
1560 the Inquisition in 1560 was a new cause of bitterness
and hostility. Home affairs began gradually to absorb
the attention which had formerly been devoted to the
Indies, until they became comparatively abandoned to
private enterprise. Scenes of intolerance and piracy
now abounded along the Asiatic coast; and the entry
was gradually prepared for other nations, who were
at least less hateful than the Portuguese.

The tranquillity at home during the long-continued
course of discovery and conquest shows few events for
history to record. The stern severity of John II. had
been a salutary warning to the nobles; and the
accession of Emmanuel, a sovereign who was born
with no expectation of the throne, and who, from his
sympathies and his distant relationship to the late
king, had been almost one of themselves, had gratified
their pride. They now became the supporters, instead
of the antagonists, of the throne. The unaccustomed
reconciliation had its effect in a decrease of the in-
fluence of the clergy and of the burgesses. The
taxation of ecclesiastical revenues was proposed; and
the Cortes were less frequently consulted. The power
of the crown was thus extending over every rank;
and though some symptoms of discontent occasionally
arose they were not sufficient to disturb peace.

Of the marriages of Emmanuel, one at least, from its influence and its hopes, deserves more than a mere passing notice. Isabella, the eldest daughter of the Catholic sovereigns, is said to have shown a religious zeal that was not unworthy of her parentage. The Jews, expelled from Aragon and from Castile, had found a refuge in Portugal. Their expulsion had been demanded by the bride as the price of her hand; and the banishment and persecution of a race of subjects industrious and peaceable is a blot upon her husband's reign. The glorious prospects, however, which the marriage soon offered appeared to counterbalance all disadvantages. The only son of Ferdinand and Isabella expired in 1497, and the bride of Emmanuel became heir to the kingdoms of her parents. At the very time when Vasco da Gama was opening in the East a new empire for his sovereign, Emmanuel beheld his wife and child saluted as the heirs of a dominion which would unite the thrones of the Peninsula, and add the discoveries of Columbus on the West to those of da Gama on the East. But death unhappily cut short the brilliant hope. Isabella died in 1498; and the child whose greatness would have excluded the fortunes of Charles V. and Philip II., followed his mother to the grave within two years.

The religious zeal which had been shown in the days of Emmanuel continued to be displayed under John III. John has the character of a prudent and ¹⁵²¹ beneficent sovereign, and he won the affections of his people; but his reign is marked by the introduction of the Inquisition and of the Jesuits into Portugal. ¹⁵²⁶⁻⁴⁰ The natural devotion of his own mind may have been

A.D. stimulated by the influence and the example of Castile. His subjects long opposed and long regretted his acts. He acquired, however, a true title to gratitude by the just appreciation of the interests of the country that marks his foreign policy. The progress of decline in Asia could not permanently be arrested; but the importance of America, the unimportance of Africa, were at length recognized. Brazil, whose rich soil and climate had until now been only utilized for the maintenance of the criminal or degraded classes of
 1549 Portugal, was now considered of sufficient importance to receive a governor; and the foundation of the towns of Pernambuco and San Salvador date from this period. The Moorish wars, which had been continued with intermittent energy, were seen at length to be a constant drain upon the country, and to bring no adequate return. Of the minor conquests many were now abandoned; and the Christian strength was concentrated in the more important localities, such as Ceuta and Tangier. Fortunate indeed would it have been for Portugal had John's successor adopted his policy; but with more of the religious ardour he had less of the worldly prudence of his predecessor, and schemes of conquest, fanned by Jesuit influence, were soon to make Africa the grave of all his country's hopes.

1554 At the birth of Dom Sebastian there stood a figure draped in black beside the Princess Juana and foretold the doom of Portugal; demoniac forms were seen to dance their triumph in the place of the newborn child; and the misfortunes of a later age gained
 1557 credence for these tales. At three years old Sebastian

was King. But the weight of the crown which he had inherited was upheld by the firm hands of his grandmother Queen Catherine, to whom John III. had bequeathed the regency, and under her care the early years of his childhood were safely passed. As the strength and spirit of the boy, however, increased, the influence of the Jesuits was exerted ; and the guardianship of a relation was abandoned to follow the guidance of a confessor. Religion became thenceforth the thought and object of the young King's life ; and if his spirit longed for war it was that he might emulate the deeds and achieve the glory of those who had fought and conquered for the Cross. On the waves and in the field, he strove, till manhood should arrive, to gain endurance that should fit him for this cause ; and those who ruled under his name did not reprove pursuits whose very excess contributed to their power. But the affairs of the empire meanwhile were neglected ; the condition of the Indies was unnoticed or unrelieved ; and the dreams of Sebastian pointed only to the barren shores of Africa and the unprofitable glories of a Crusading King.

The opportunity for which he longed soon came. 1576
Muley Ahmed, a Moorish prince, who had been dispossessed by his uncle Muley Moluc of his paternal throne, appealed for help ; and, in spite of the warnings of counsellors and of relations, Sebastian sailed for 1578
Africa. It was now being opened to him, as he declared, by the providence of God. Should he fall, the succession to his throne would belong to his great-uncle, the Cardinal Henry. But the age and calling of the Cardinal appeared to preclude the hope of a direct

A.D.

heir; and the strife of competitors, which would then succeed, could only be anticipated by the nation with dismay. Philip II. of Spain beheld the expedition of his nephew with his usual calmness. Success would prove the triumph of his faith; failure might bring the whole inheritance of Portugal within his grasp. The existence of a nation was thus at stake. Yet the fleet set sail as though not even ordinary care and foresight were required. Women and children crowded the ships, as though for a pleasure party, not for war. The army advanced, regardless, as it seemed, of heat, and fever, and fatigue, and eager only to secure the victory before the death of Muley Molue, who was wasting with disease, should rob it of its glory. On the plains of Alcazar Quibir Sebastian took up a position whose weakness his self-confidence alone could have overlooked; and, in the battle which he rashly fought, his own heroism and that of his men could not avail to avert defeat. The Moorish King had died within his own litter on the field; but the spirit of his generalship had survived, and his officers had still been seen to bend, as he had wished, before the curtains, and to return undiscouraged with fresh orders for their troops. The Portuguese had had no general; they were dispersed and driven from the field; and their King himself perished in the flight.

The lamentation broke forth with the vehemence of despair. Conscious of its decline, the nation felt that the blow which was to end its existence had fallen. "At least I die with her," was the exclamation of Camoens, as he heard upon his death-bed the tale of

1578-80 his stricken country. The short reign of the Cardinal-

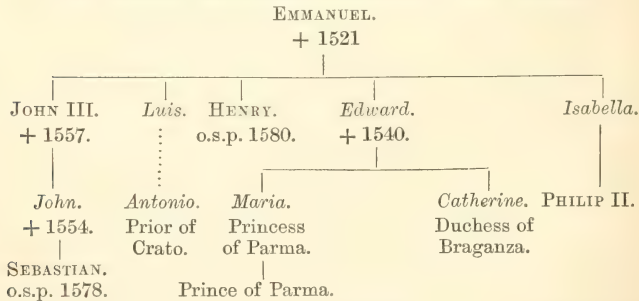
King was but a time of gloomy anticipation, for the events which were to come had cast their shadow before them. Sebastian, regardless of an heir, had refused to think of marriage. The Cardinal, it is said, now sought from the Pope absolution from his vows, but was met by delays which the influence of Spain procured. Undecided at first, he pronounced at length in favour of Philip II. as his heir; but, while the Cortes were debating, his death occurred, and the 1580 succession was still unsettled.

Competitors, as had been foreseen, arose. The undoubted heir was the Duchess of Braganza, a daughter of Dom Edward, the next brother to the late King. Her elder sister indeed had left issue; but her marriage with Alexander, Prince of Parma, a foreigner, had deprived her, under the original settlement of Lamego, of her rights, and the Duchess therefore, whose husband was a Portuguese, had become the legal heir. She had the disadvantage, however, of her sex. No female had yet reigned in Portugal; and she was without ambition and without power. Others, with less title but with greater strength, prepared to contend for her inheritance. Philip of Spain, the lord of Naples, of the Netherlands, and of the Indies, desired to add Portugal to his dominions. He put forward a claim in right of his mother, a sister of the Cardinal-King, and attempted by specious arguments to prove its validity. He relied more probably, however, upon his strength, upon the inducements which he held out to the Duchess of Braganza to abandon her claim, and upon the preference expressed for him by the late King. A third competitor was Dom Antonio, Prior of Crato. He

A.D. also attempted to give an appearance of validity to his claim, by proclaiming himself the legitimate son of the Infant Dom Luis, an elder brother of the Cardinal. But the proofs of his bastardy were apparent, and his uncle had reigned unquestioned to his prejudice. In the inaction, however, of the Duchess of Braganza, in the dislike that was felt for Philip, as a foreign master, he had strength. He was popular; he was the representative of the nation, as it seemed, against strangers; and there were many who recalled the victory of Aljubarrota won by a bastard King.*

The Duchess of Braganza, ceasing to prosecute her claim, left the field open; and the struggle lay between Philip and Dom Antonio. But the promises and

* The following table shows the position of these claimants:



Competitors who attracted less attention were, (1) The Duke of Savoy, son of a younger sister of the Cardinal-King, (2) Catherine de Medicis, descended, as she said, from a son of Affonso III., whose existence could not be verified, (3) Gregory XIII., claiming the kingdom, both as a fief of the Holy See, and as the estate of a Cardinal, to whom in virtue of their position the Popes were heirs.

Philip II. endeavoured to support his claim by urging that the decree of Lamego, excluding foreigners, did not apply to him, as Portugal had originally belonged to Spain, and that where the degree of consanguinity was equal a preference should be given to the male heir.

power of Spain were irresistible: and after a defeat at Alcantara Dom Antonio became a fugitive, and was reduced to seek at foreign courts the support which his own country could no longer give. The Duke of Alva, too famous for his government of blood in the Netherlands, led an army to Lisbon. The city was plundered like a conquered town, and the whole kingdom submitted after a resistance which had hardly 1583 been serious because hopeless. The days of greatness had gone by for ever. Portugal was no longer her own. The Captivity, as her writers have called it, which was to endure for sixty years, had begun; and during that time the loss of empire and of fame was 1580-1640 consummated under the crushing policy of Spain.

It is sufficient to pass lightly over the years in which the history as well as the independence of the country was merged in that of its great neighbour. The kingdom was weakened that its independence might be destroyed; and Philip, while he strove to reduce it to a mere province of his crown, became hated in proportion as he was feared. False Sebastians arose; and as the people groaned they fondly hoped and even believed that their own King would come again to redeem them from the hand of the oppressor. The enemies of Spain became their enemies. The English, no longer friends, took their revenge for the Armada upon the shores of Portugal; the Dutch, from peaceful customers, became their hostile rivals, and supplanted them in the rich commerce of the Asiatic Seas.

The loss of the Indies was a blow extinguishing the hopes of greatness. The nation that had disdained to

A.D.

A.D. — be confined within the narrow limits that had bounded it in Europe sank back from its momentary exaltation, and even the continual possession of Brazil did not avail to sustain its importance. Philip II. had wished to give the trade of Portugal to Spain, he had allowed its fleets and harbours to decay, and for an exhausted country he would have substituted a Spanish Company. But he could only secure the abasement of Portugal, and not the aggrandizement of Spain. At war with the United Provinces, he had believed it to be his policy to exclude Dutch vessels from the markets of the peninsula, and he thus drove them to seek for themselves the commodities which he should have been anxious to supply. The Dutch appeared in the Indian Seas, as the Portuguese had done before, to combat the monopoly and to supplant the power of their predecessors. Vice and intolerance had done their work; and the new comers, with their juster views of trade, and their non-interference in matters of religion, were welcomed by the native princes as
 1601 avengers and deliverers. Malacca was first attacked.
 1607 The Molucca Islands were taken. Batavia was founded as a rival to Goa in 1618. And, while factories were established, the flag of Holland insulted Spain along a coast whose length had made it impossible to defend. Before the independence of Portugal was restored their dominion of the East was
 1624 lost, and even Brazil was threatened by the presence of the Dutch invaders.*

* "When will you regain these losses?" asked the conquerors. "When your vices," answered the Portuguese, "shall have equalled ours."

Philip III. is said to have at one time intended to transfer his capital to Lisbon; and had this been done, the presence of a Castilian aristocracy, their acquisition of lands, and the necessary mingling of their interests with those of the Portuguese, might perhaps have caused the permanent amalgamation of the two people. But the design was never executed, and the Portuguese remained a nation apart, with only such Castilians amongst them as were required for their government. Disaffection, which so far from lessening gradually increased, united the nobles and the people. The Duke of Braganza, the grandson of that Duchess whose rights had been ignored, was regarded as the natural head of the nation. "There will be no peace till weeds are growing on the steps of Villa Viciosa," said Olivares, the minister of Philip IV.; and conscious of the gathering troubles he strove to avert them by offering to the Duke successive posts which would have compelled him to leave his country. The offers, however, were made in vain; excuses continually were found; and the Duke remained in Portugal to ascend its throne.

A.D.

1598-1621

Philip IV.
1621-40

Taxation brought on the crisis. In 1637 the town of Evora rose, and shouted ominously for Braganza. But its cries were disavowed, and its temerity was punished. In 1640, however, the propitious moment appeared to have come; and while the King of Spain was fighting against the revolted Catalans, and the influence and support of France, who was then engaged against the Imperialists in the Thirty Years' War, encouraged the attempt, a conspiracy was formed to place the Duke of Braganza on the throne. There

A D. was more amiability, however, than greatness in his character, and it appeared doubtful how far he would countenance the attempt; nor was it until the high spirit of the Duchess, who, though a Spaniard, preferred to be the Queen of Portugal, had nerved him to the struggle, that his adherence was at length signified.

Suspicion was aroused in Spain, and a design was even entertained of making the Duke a prisoner. The great retinue, however, with which he was now surrounded, defeated these plans, and a direct summons to Madrid was determined on. The Duke replied that he would come; but the conspirators now felt that the time for action had arrived; and the plot which had already grown, and had secretly received adherents, was fixed for execution on the 1st December. On that morning, as the streets were thronged apparently with their usual traffic, a pistol shot was heard. In an instant every vehicle stood still. Armed men appeared before the palace, while from a window came a voice which cried "Long life to John IV. and death to traitors!" The multitude gave answer with their shouts. Their unanimity secured success, and had no need of bloodshed. One victim of note, the obnoxious minister Vasconcellos, alone perished. The Regent Margaret, obliged to recognize the inutility of resistance, forbade it; and within a few hours the Archbishop of Lisbon had chanted a *Te Deum* for the overthrow of Spain.

The provinces followed the example of the capital; and the Duke of Braganza, on his way to Lisbon, passed through towns and villages that joyously

saluted him as their King. On the 15th of December, A.D. 1640 he was crowned as John IV., and the exultation of the nation in the recovery of its existence was complete. Nor was that exultation destined to be quelled. The power of Spain had fallen. France, Catalonia, the United Provinces, were enemies already more than sufficient for her strength, and she could not march to crush the general uprising. Mere paper protests were at first resorted to. Intrigue was next attempted. And when, after the death of Olivares, and the lapse of three years, there came a change of plan, and an army at length appeared to reduce the country, it was found that the nation had tasted too long of independence, and was not disposed to yield it. The verdict of Aljubarrota was reasserted upon the field of 1644 Montijo: and foreign powers began to pay their acknowledgments to a sovereign whose throne they now regarded as secure.

Spain, in her continued resentment and hostility, was supported by the Emperor and by the Pope. They were the natural allies of an Austrian dynasty and of the Most Catholic King. The Imperial views indeed might be a matter of indifference to Portugal, but the power of Spain was at her gates, and, as a religious nation, she dreaded the hostility of Rome. Her frontiers were harassed with attacks, which, although desultory and resultless, were a standing cause of irritation and alarm; her bishoprics remained unfilled, and her ambassadors unacknowledged, by the Pope. To repel and to conciliate became therefore the objects of John's reign; and, while his troops defended the frontier, his council gave concessions to the Jesuits, which it

A.D. was hoped might appease the hostility of Innocent X.
 — Under Affonso VI., who reigned first as a minor, and
 1656 then as a man whose follies and vices disgraced both
 his country and himself, hostilities were still prolonged ;
 and so great were the apprehensions of Portugal, when
 1659 the Peace of the Pyrenees had left Spain free to direct
 all her energies against the West, that offers of vassalage,
 and even of the surrender of all except the kingdom
 of Algarve and Brazil, were made by the Regent. But
 the pride of Spain in grasping at too much lost all.
 The new armies that were sent against the Portuguese
 were beaten and forced to retreat. In the moment of
 distress levies of men and arms had been sought in
 England, whose sovereign, Charles II., had become
 united in marriage to the House of Braganza ; an
 illustrious Frenchman, Count Schomberg, lent his
 genius to the cause ; and new victories, at the obscure
 villages of Ameixial and Montes Claros, sustained the
 independence that had been won. “God wills it,” said
 the dying Philip IV., as the news was brought to him ;
 and his feeble successor, Charles II., with the same
 resignation, signed the peace, which, after the long
 1668 protest of eight and twenty years, renounced for ever
 the supremacy over Portugal.

Yet the independence which was thus established
 had been won in weakness, and had been due to the
 decline of Spain and not to the strength of Portugal.
 A nation impoverished at home, with her external
 resources lost, and under sovereigns, of whom the first
 had no great capacity, while the second was so inca-
 pable as to be driven by his own subjects from the
 throne, must have struggled in vain had it met with

such a power as that of Philip II.; and therefore, though we behold the nation successfully rising against the Spanish yoke, we do not behold her rising to her old pre-eminence in Europe. The empire upon which her greatness had reposed was gone. No longer mistress of three continents, of Asia, Africa, and South America, she retained the last alone, the least valuable, as it then appeared, of her former possessions. The colonies of Africa, which had been mere stations for supply, had wasted or submitted to a rival's power. Of the conquests in the north, the whole were gone. Tangier had passed to England, as the dowry of the Princess Catherine; and Ceuta still remained in possession of Spain. In Asia, Dutch settlements, like tares among the wheat, had choked the Portuguese power. Whole districts, such as Malacca and Ceylon, were in their hands; while trade was almost monopolized by their ships. Ormuz had passed by conquest, and Bombay as the price of levies under Charles II., to the English. Even the Danes had established themselves as early as 1616 at Tranquebar; and Swedish vessels had traded upon the same coast. Goa, Diu, and a few other towns alone remained; and even from these the life had departed under the jealous policy of Spain. Instead of the many vessels which had sailed each year from Lisbon to the Golden City, three or four alone had been despatched under the Spanish rule. The fleets had thus decayed, the seafaring spirit of the nation had been lost. Nor did the character and occupations of the reigns of John IV. and of Affonso VI. give any opportunity for recovery; so that by the time of Pedro IV., who succeeded to the throne

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in 1667, there were not 300 registered seamen in the port of Lisbon, and the empire of the seas was ended.

Brazil itself had with difficulty been saved. By 1635 1635 the half of it was in possession of the ubiquitous Dutch, and the necessity of peace compelled John IV. 1641 to recognize their position. But their conduct soon provoked the hostility of the older colonists; and a Portuguese, of the name of Vieira, though disavowed at the time by the sovereign whom he compromised, has the glory of having vindicated successfully the 1654 dominion of his countrymen. He led in a general rising against the invaders; he compelled them, after a succession of encounters, to abandon their settlements; 1660 and a final treaty in 1660, which gave to the Dutch some compensation in a sum of money, left the country thenceforward in the undisturbed possession of its first discoverers.

1667 The rule of Pedro IV. began in 1667. The character of Affonso had alienated the affections of his people and of his wife, and both had been transferred to his younger but more capable brother. While Affonso lingered for the long space of sixteen years under restraint, Pedro contented himself with the title of 1683 Regent, and it was not until the death of his brother in 1683 that he was proclaimed King. Peace and a wiser administration of the kingdom during his reign give happily but few events for history to record; but, as the 18th century opens, the war of the Spanish Succession begins, and Portugal, from her interests and position, was unable to remain a mere spectator of the strife.

The first sympathies of Pedro had been with France;

and he had been among the first to congratulate the Bourbon King of Spain upon his accession to the throne. But the French power soon began to appear formidable, especially when viewed under the influence of the representations and promises of the Allies; and by separate treaties in 1703 Portugal acceded to the 1703 Grand Alliance. She now agreed to recognize the Austrian Archduke as soon as he should land in Spain, and to levy a force of 27,000 men in his cause. The cession of certain towns in Galicia and Estremadura, of a district north of Guiana in South America, and of a disputed island off Bombay, were to be her reward. Nor did the price of friendship seem too high; and a commercial treaty with England, since known by the name of Methuen, its negotiator, was framed to cement still further the alliance. Henceforth the western frontier of Spain was bared for the attack, and Lisbon might become the harbour and the camp for all aggressive purposes to the Allies.

The Portuguese, who had groaned so long beneath the imposition of a Spanish King, were now, as they thought, to enjoy the satisfaction of imposing in their turn a King upon the Spaniards. The spring of 1706 saw English troops arrive; and a united army, advancing through Estremadura, became victorious everywhere. Madrid was entered without a check; and the Austrian Archduke was proclaimed King. The cause of the Allies, as it appeared, was won, and even the court of Versailles deliberated upon the abandonment of the strife. But the Castilian spirit, so apathetic until now, began at length to rise. The presence of the Portuguese in Spain brought bitterness; and,

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within three months, the invaders, who had wasted their time, and had met with neither sympathy nor supplies, had abandoned the capital for the re-entry of a rival King. The short gleam of fortune had passed. The Portuguese were pursued into Valencia, and the defeat of Alhanza annihilated their hopes. The weight of the battle fell upon their ranks; their whole force almost was destroyed. Conquests had now to be abandoned, and their own frontiers to be secured. The troops of Philip V. triumphed upon, and even invaded, their borders; and not even a later victory of the Allies at Saragossa was able to restore them to their old position.

But the support of England, both in the field and
1713 in the conferences at Utrecht, preserved the country. John V., who had succeeded to his father in 1706, was remembered rather for his efforts than for his successes, and his territory remained intact. Above all, Brazil, which had been threatened by a French fleet, was secured to him; and in the years of peace, which now began, was found the leisure for the enjoyment of those riches which new discoveries were opening. The Indies were lost; Goa and Diu were now but ruins; yet new visions had arisen from the West, as though, according to the Spanish proverb, one gate was opening as another closed. In 1699, explorers, who had dared to penetrate the Brazilian forests, had discovered the first gold mines. In 1711, the rich districts of Goyas and Matto Grosso were found; and the climax of discovery was reached when the first diamonds were
1728 brought home in 1728. The prosperity of former days appeared about to revive; and, while agriculture was

abandoned by the colonists in their eager search for gold, their countrymen at home were willing to foresee new riches poured before their feet and their kingdom again becoming pre-eminent in Europe.

The disappointment of these hopes was the melancholy but not unnatural result of the corruption of the 18th century. The age of Louis XIV. had exalted France to a pinnacle of greatness; and the undiscerning gaze of Europe had extended its admiration so as to imitate the defects as well as the excellences of the reign that had succeeded to it. Foreign courts were vying with each other in the luxury or laxity of tone that should equal or surpass that of Louis XV.; and Portugal, with the means of indulgence, and with a King too weak even to wish to check it, was the dissipator of her own fortunes. John V. himself gave the example of extravagance. His feasts, his dress, his mistresses, themselves the imitation of Versailles, were imitated too speedily by his court, until in the midst of wealth there was often want. During the latter portion of the reign another influence contributed to swell the expenditure. The King, amidst his pleasures, inclined to the devotion which was a contrast or an atonement for them, and devoted large sums to objects of religion. The building and endowment of a cathedral at Lisbon, which was to imitate St. Peter's, the erection of a vast convent at Mafra, the expenses of religious processions, and the pomp of religious executions, absorbed the revenue, and brought no benefit beyond the empty honour of a patriarchate for Lisbon and the title of the Most Faithful for its King. The royal superstition increased with the royal infirmities,

A.D. — until at length both King and kingdom fell beneath the power of a Jesuit confessor, whose interests led him to forget the dignity of the sovereign for whom he ruled.

1750-77 The ministry of Pombal, the "Great Marquis" as he is still called, redeems the period from 1750 to 1777 from the general character of decline towards which the incapacity of succeeding sovereigns was contributing. A government was inaugurated that was essentially bold and liberal in its conceptions; and Joseph I. has at least the credit of having allowed his minister and not himself to become the foremost person of his reign. Already Pombal had served on embassies to London and Vienna, when, in 1750, chance and the necessities of etiquette caused his promotion to the rank of secretary of state in order that he might direct the obsequies of John V. The discernment of the widowed Queen encouraged her son to confide in the new minister, and the vigour of his rule became at once apparent. Agriculture, and trade, and manufactures, which had sunk beneath the indolence induced through Brazilian gold, were encouraged by the remission of dues, by the restriction of monopolies, and by the taxation of foreign imports. The fleet, which had fallen to fifteen or sixteen vessels, was recruited; and Companies, after the example of the Dutch, were formed for the development of Brazil and of the East Indies, in the hope that a united and systematic action might bring more profit than had fallen to the irregularities of private enterprise. Every department, every question almost, and even the minutest details, received consideration from the

indefatigable minister; and when the calamity of A.D.
earthquake, in 1755, made Lisbon a ruin, it was his 1755
care, expended with almost marvellous activity upon every point, that restored order and beauty to the capital.

The long subservience of the country to the Jesuits was now also ended. The character of Pombal recoiled from priestly influence, and the political conduct of the Order had given serious cause for hostility. Under the late King, a treaty had been signed with Spain, by which the colony of San Sacramento had been exchanged for certain districts of Paraguay. But the Jesuits, who had established their influence in the country, were unwilling to recognize a new sovereign, and, finding their own ambition seconded by the affection of the people, preferred to assert an entire independence. Their armed resistance in America was aided by intrigues at home; and Pombal, conscious of the difficulties of the strife, determined to aim a blow at the whole Order. He accordingly denounced them before the court of Rome on account of the secular tendencies to trade which they had shown. Benedict III. had no sympathy with such pursuits, and he appointed the Cardinal Saldanha, a relation of the Portuguese minister, to make a visitation of the Order. The enquiry was followed by a decree which condemned their conduct and confiscated their merchandise. Within a few months after this blow had fallen upon them came the discovery of a conspiracy against the King. Returning from a visit, Joseph I. was attacked in his carriage, but escaped with a few wounds. An investigation followed. Some

A.D. of the highest nobles in the land were declared im-
plicated; and while ten were executed many were
banished. It got abroad that many of the conspirators
had had Jesuit confessors, and that these were reputed
to have said that the murder of the King would not
even be a venial sin. The opportunity of the popular
indignation was made use of. One old man suffered
death for his supposed guilt; and all the members of
1759 an Order, which was now deemed dangerous, were
forcibly transported from the shores of Portugal.

The reaction against priestly power continued.
Clement XIII. had succeeded Benedict; and, in the
support of the Jesuits, drew hostility upon himself,
until the government of the Most Faithful King was
in direct collision with the Pontiff. On the pretext
of an intended insult, by the neglect of illuminations
upon a festival, the Nuncio was forcibly carried into
Spain; and the departure of the Portuguese ambassador
from Rome followed. For a period of ten years
diplomatic intercourse was suspended; and the nation,
so devoutly submissive under John V., now learnt to
be independent under the government of his successor.
Recourse to Rome either on religious or commercial
matters was forbidden, and the power of the Crown
appeared about to supplant that of the Pope. No
priest could be ordained, no bishop was appointed,
without the royal license; sentences of excommunica-
tion in the case of officials were reserved for the royal
consideration; restrictions were made on legacies for
religious uses; and causes of mortmain and marriage
were withdrawn from the ecclesiastical courts. Clement
1769 XIV., upon his accession, desired at once to put an

end to a state of things which might have produced a permanent withdrawal of the kingdom from its ecclesiastical allegiance; and through his known views, and his concessions upon the subject of the Jesuits, was concord restored. A Nuncio was again established at Lisbon. The Portuguese, however, were able to retain much of their independence; and when the Society, against which they had been the first to rise, was abolished in 1773, they believed that they saw in its fall a new triumph for themselves.

War came once only, and only for a short time, to disturb the course of civil and ecclesiastical reforms, which have made the reign famous. Since the treaty of 1703, trade with England had increased, and the riches of the more indolent nation had been readily exchanged for the manufactures of the more industrious one. Pombal had striven by a protective policy to encourage home productions; but the dependence of his country upon England had been too long, and her influence had become too great, so that Portugal still continued one of the most profitable markets for English goods. When, therefore, the Family Compact was concluded between France and Spain, in 1761, it was determined to aim a blow at England through this channel of her wealth, and Joseph was summoned to accede to the alliance within fifteen days. He preferred, however, the trade and the protection of England to the unprofitable and it might be overpowering friendship of the Bourbons, and he answered boldly by a declaration of war. The Spanish forces in reply swept through the provinces of *Tras os Montes* and *Beira*; Lisbon itself appeared unable to resist them.

A.D. But a reinforcement of 8000 English, which harassed
the rash progress and the ill-organized attempts of the
invaders, compelled them eventually to retire without
1763 a battle, and the peace which was signed in the follow-
ing year left Portugal intact, and bound by closer ties
than ever to her protectors.

The energy of Pombal had done much for his country ; it had not acquired, however, for himself popularity. In his reforms he had disregarded opposition, he had slighted old-established usages and privileges. The nobles especially had been incensed by his acts. He had resumed, and often arbitrarily, for the crown many grants of land that had been made in Africa and in Brazil, and had compensated their holders only by the inadequate rewards of pensions and of titles. Some of these lands, moreover, had unfortunately passed into his own hands ; and the man who had been deemed a tyrant was now regarded also as a robber. The conspiracy against the King is said to have been intended only as a step towards the destruction of the minister. The power of Pombal, however, had been established by the defeat of his enemies ; and though his hand was not relaxed, and though intrigue was constantly at work, throughout the reign of Joseph II., the King had remained unshaken in his trust, and had given a continued support to the great minister whose fame has in a measure been reflected upon himself.

But with the accession of a new sovereign all was changed. The greatness of Pombal was forgotten in the cry against him ; and, dismissed from office, he retired to end his days in what was meant to be

disgrace at a distance from the court. Maria, the daughter of Joseph, the first Queen who had reigned in Portugal, took the power into her own hands, and seemed to use it only to defeat the schemes of those who had preceded her. The prisons were thrown open ; men who were at once the enemies of Pombal and of their country reappeared ; the designs of the Great Marquis remained unexecuted ; and his country, so far from rising to the place which he had sought for it, sank back again into the long decline from which he had but momentarily raised it. The imbecility of the Queen, which occurred in 1792, gave the kingdom into the hands of her son, who was afterwards John VI., as Regent. He had been, however, a younger brother ; his life had been spent in a cloister ; and he infused no vigour into the government. And thus, at the very opening of the great events which were to convulse Europe, the country was in no condition to steer its course, and had to drift as the strength of the current bore it.

There is an interest peculiar to England in the history of Portugal during the years that we have now to trace. The first intercourse between the two nations had occurred as early as the 13th century, when the common pursuits of maritime and commercial states had already created the necessity for formal agreements between them. Since then, continued friendship and renewed treaties, the marriages of John I. with Catherine of Lancaster, of Catherine of Braganza with Charles II., the armed support of England against the power of Spain in the 17th century, and her alliances against that of France in

A.D.

1777

A.D. the 18th, had strengthened the connection between the two countries. These ties were now to be succeeded by an intercourse more close than any that had yet occurred. A common danger united the two countries. The aggressions of Napoleon were to be combated upon the soil of the Peninsula; and the union of English and of Portuguese, upon the field and in the council, became the means of drawing close the sympathies and the attachment between the two people.

The policy of the country was soon apparent. The 1793 Regent united with all Europe in proclaiming his hostility to the French Republic. He sent 6000 men to aid the cause of Spain in 1795, and a fleet to observe, if not to share in, the events in Egypt. The conduct of Portugal was to be atoned for, as Napoleon declared, with tears of blood; but at first she suffered little for her acts. France was engaged with greater enemies, and could not heed its distant and less formidable foes. But as the power of the French Republic was established, as the schemes of the First Consul were developed, the position of the country engaged attention. She had insulted France; she was the friend of England. The conquest of her seemed easy; and its achievement would give new claims to compensation in any settlement that might ensue. Spain, won over by the bribe held out to Charles IV. of the new kingdom of Etruria for his relative, was made the instrument of French ambition. Her armies advanced on Portugal, and laid down to a defenceless people the terms of their submission. A French invasion followed, so as to complete the work, which

the leniency of Spain was considered to have only partially fulfilled. The cession of half Guiana and of £800,000 to France, with the confirmation of the small province of Olivenza to Spain, were made the price of peace; and had it not been that the negotiations for the Peace of Amiens were in progress, and that bribes were freely scattered by the Portuguese government among French agents, the sacrifices demanded of the country must have been still heavier. A.D.

Six years now followed during which the tranquillity 1801-7 of Portugal was undisturbed. The nation had accepted French ascendancy; and the judicious tact of General Lannes, the French ambassador, encouraged its submission. There were causes, however, which re-aroused in time the ancient enmity. The policy of Junot, who succeeded Lannes, was less conciliatory than that of his predecessor; the great victory of Trafalgar appeared to teach the lesson that the yoke of France might yet be shaken off; and, finally, the arrogance of Napoleon, whose determination after the Peace of Tilsit to extend his dominions over the kingdoms of the West had become fixed, made men, who had before been hesitating, hostile. The enforcement of the Continental System, to the ruin of the country's trade, the expulsion of the English, who had re-entered the kingdom since the peace, the seizure of their goods, and a declaration of war against their nation, were required by the imperious Emperor. The Regent submitted humbly to almost every demand. He could not yield, however, so far as to confiscate the possessions of his late allies. The wealthier merchants, foreseeing war at hand, embarked their riches for a

A.D. safer soil. The storm that all men knew was threaten-
— ing then burst. An army on its way to Lisbon crossed
1807 the Pyrenees; and in the pages of the French news-
paper appeared the words, “the House of Braganza
has ceased to reign.”

Spain, with the promise of the northern provinces for herself, and of the southern as a principality for her chief minister, Godoy, united in attempting to give reality to the prophetic boast. A panic seized upon the doomed family. The imbecile Queen alone, in madness or in shame, would have remained to brave the invaders. Her son, the Regent, followed the example of his subjects; and, embarking the royal treasures, fled with his whole family before the storm. The French army, to which no resistance could be made, arrived at Lisbon, to see, but not to stop, the royal vessel as it cleared the harbour. The country became the unresisting prey of the invaders; and the people, abandoned by their sovereign, and almost by hope, remained the powerless victims of a French occupation.

Twice had the kingdom fallen beneath its enemies. The honour and the interests of England alike forbade that it should rest beneath them. The importance of the country, as a basis from which to curb the power
1808 of France, was recognized; and on the 30th of July, 1808, Sir Arthur Wellesley landed in Mondego bay for its defence. Already the path to freedom was prepared. Oppression had produced revolt; the capitulation of Baylen in Spain had encouraged resistance; and an insurgent junta was established at Oporto. One month beheld the fight of Roliça, the

battle of Vimeiro, and the convention of Cintra, by which the French, so lately triumphant, agreed to evacuate the country. A stronger hand than her own had intervened to save Portugal, and her independence, though still threatened, was never again lost.

The kingdom, deserted by her sovereign, divided by factions, and enfeebled in strength, remained the ally of England. Her weakness made her necessarily dependent on her more powerful protector; and to England she became indebted for the aid of troops, for gold to pay and to equip her native levies, and for officers to lead them. An Englishman, Marshal Beresford, was even appointed to the command of her whole army. It was hardly possible that a nation thus placed under the tutelage of foreigners should not feel in some degree humiliation; and jealousies and murmurings were not unfrequent, both in the Council of Regency, and among the populace. As the danger, which had shown the necessity for the alliance, became less imminent, the remembrance of the benefits derived from it was forgotten, that of the sacrifices entailed became predominant. Unworthy feelings threatened often to paralyse the common cause. But prudence still sustained the alliance; and the country, if it endured dependence, escaped servitude.

The successes of the French in Spain during the winter of 1808, and the disastrous retreat of the army of Sir John Moore, encouraged Marshal Soult to renew an attempt upon the Portuguese frontier. Successful in the north, he gained possession of Oporto, but was unable to retain his conquest before the advancing English under Lord Wellington. Again the country

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— was evacuated. Its importance had now, however, become more fully recognized in England, and every means was taken by its allies to preserve its independence. The advance of Massena, in 1810, to retrieve the failure of Soult, was combated with a decision and with a success that showed the English policy to be no longer doubtful. Retiring before the enemy, whose numbers were greater than their own, the English and the Portuguese reserved their strength for the defence of the famous lines of Torres Vedras. Within those lines, that guarded the peninsula that lies between the Tagus and the ocean, was sheltered the independence and the capital of Portugal. The French, repulsed in the first instance at Busaco, were now confronted by three lines of fortifications, which the labours of twelve months had extended for nine and twenty miles, and had armed with 600 guns. The way to Lisbon was barred; and the retreat of an exhausted army was the confession of defeat. At Fuentes d'Onore, upon the 1811 frontiers, there was a final triumph won, and then the soil of Portugal was freed for ever from the presence of its would-be oppressors.

The war was thenceforth carried into Spain, and throughout the operations, by which the power of France was shattered within the Peninsula, the Portuguese bore an honourable if a subsidiary part. The history, however, of these campaigns is not within the compass of this chapter; their effect alone is to be noticed. The Portuguese emerged upon the side of 1814 victory. Their territory, as it stood after the peace of 1801, remained intact; their independence was assured to them. They did not reap the spoil of added pro-

vinces or of apportioned indemnities. Their sacrifices, however, had been less great than those of other nations, and the integrity and the freedom of their country appeared a sufficient reward.

The prosperity of the kingdom might now have been hoped for, and yet a decline is at once apparent. The imbecile Queen Maria expired in 1816; and John VI. succeeded to a throne whose sceptre he had long swayed. The kingdom which in its calamity he had abandoned he did not offer to revisit; and, with its prestige diminished under British protection and British rule, he was even willing still further to abase it, by transferring the seat of empire to Brazil, and by degrading the ancient realms of Portugal and the Algarves to the condition of provinces. Factions arose: the conflicting ideas, which a revolutionary age and the reaction against it had excited, divided the country; and a series of party struggles began, which have wasted the strength of the kingdom, and have diminished the respect and interest for it in Europe. In 1820 the first of a long list of revolutions occurred. The free institutions and prosperity of England had become well known; the example of Spain, which had just risen against the despotism of Ferdinand VII., was contagious; and men of wealth and station united in a demand for liberal reforms. The sovereignty of the people was proclaimed by the adoption of universal suffrage; but in this, as in all succeeding changes, the loyalty to the person of the sovereign remained unshaken, and an embassy was sent to John IV. in Brazil to beg his sanction for what had been done.

The grant of a Constitution followed; and the King

A.D. — himself, at last returning from Brazil, appeared to ratify the wishes of his subjects. Colonial troubles next succeeded to domestic ones. Brazil, which had been elevated by a decree of 1815 to the rank of a kingdom, re-echoed the demand for independence that had pervaded Europe. The severance of all connection with the parent state was asked for. The King, foreseeing what must come, had warned his son, before he left for Europe, to lead, if he could not stem, the movement. "It were better," he wisely argued, "to retain the crown, than to see it pass to some adventurer." The impatient conduct of the Portuguese Cortes precipitated a rupture. The independence of the Empire of Brazil was proclaimed in 1822, and was acknowledged, after a lingering resistance, by Portugal in 1825. Don Pedro, the eldest son of John VI., was rewarded for his prudence by being declared Emperor; and the House of Braganza thus still retained, under the sway of different members, the whole of its possessions. But the crown of Portugal was shorn of half its splendour, of a province which had extended its power into a second hemisphere, and which had far surpassed in riches and extent the more ancient dominions within the Old World.

Portugal, reduced to little more than the strip which she had been before the great discoveries of her navigators, was no longer a Power that could influence or even greatly interest the more important kingdoms of the world. Her history now becomes the tale of faction and of civil strife. The concessions which had been made by John VI. were applauded by some and were condemned by others. As their inefficiency in

securing progress or prosperity became revealed, the cry arose for a return to the old despotic institutions and for the government of an absolute King. Don Miguel, the second son of John VI., a prince of incapacity but of ambition, became the head of a confederacy for the recall of the recent Constitution ; and his entry upon the field of politics is the commencement of a period which became disastrous through its civil discords. 1824

The Constitution which had been so lately granted was revoked, but the wishes of Dom Miguel were still unsatisfied. He aspired to reign in Portugal to the exclusion of his elder brother, the Emperor of Brazil, and did not even respect the authority of his father. King John, retiring to an English frigate, decreed from his place of safety the banishment of a son whom even the indulgence of a father could no longer pardon. But the ambition of Don Miguel was not extinguished ; and the death of the King, in the following year, 1826 appeared to open a way for its gratification.

Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, assumed the inheritance of his father's throne. It was impossible to hope, however, that the union of Portugal and Brazil, which had so lately been dissolved, could now be restored ; and the few weeks therefore during which Dom Pedro enjoyed a double sovereignty were made use of merely to conciliate his Portuguese subjects by the grant of a liberal charter and to transfer his rights over the kingdom to his daughter, Donna Maria da Gloria. The opposition of Dom Miguel was foreseen ; and an attempt to disarm it was made by the proposal of a marriage between the young Queen and her uncle.

A.D. The Cortes accepted the arrangement, and the assent
— of Dom Miguel himself at first was declared ; but, after
a few delusive protestations, his own ambition and the
promptings of his adherents inspired a more selfish
policy, and from being first Regent for his destined
bride he became the usurper of her crown.

The claim of her father's title, of his renunciation in
her favour, and of the acceptance of that renunciation
by the Cortes, was pleaded for Donna Maria. On the
side of Dom Miguel it was urged that the acceptance
by his brother of the Empire of Brazil had been
equivalent to a surrender of his claims on Portugal ;
that having therefore no rights he could transmit none
to his children ; and that Dom Miguel himself was the
next male heir. A war ensued, which for six years
distracted the unhappy country. Donna Maria arrived
in Europe to find that only Terceira, the chief island
1828 of the Azores, was faithful to her. Appealing in vain
to England, she began to find her cause hopeless ; and,
committing her interests to the care of a few partisans,
she returned to Brazil to wait for a more favourable
1829 opportunity. The time was soon to come. In 1831
1831 the abdication of the Brazilian crown left Dom Pedro
her father more free to espouse her cause ; and crossing
to Europe he prepared at once to enforce with activity
her claims. Volunteers were levied in England and
in France ; and sailing with these troops to the Azores
he formally proclaimed his daughter under his own
regency, and passed with his united forces to the
Portuguese coast.

Oporto, foremost as ever in the liberal cause, re-
ceived him with open arms, and the long siege which

she endured at the hands of the Miguelites is the main incident in the war. The northern provinces were lukewarm in the strife; but Dom Pedro was now master of the second city of the kingdom, and the sea was open at his back. As his enemies pressed on the siege, he formed a plan to detach a force to Algarve, which should ascend towards Lisbon and the north through a country that was now drained of its defenders. The attempt succeeded; the naval forces of Don Miguel were defeated; and after a victorious march the capital itself threw open its gates. The cause of the Absolutists trembled in the balance. The surrender of Oporto might yet have turned the scale; but within a day after the loss of Lisbon the besieging army was signally repulsed, and the triumph of the Liberal party was secured.

Dom Pedro hastened to the capital and established his authority. The attempt of the Miguelites, who soon after abandoned Oporto, to advance on Lisbon failed; and Donna Maria arrived to be crowned Queen. Hostilities were continued, but without vigour; and soon the death of Ferdinand VII. of Spain, and the signature of the Quadruple Alliance, by which, in their newly awakened ardour for constitutionalism, the courts of England, France, and Spain, were united to that of Portugal, deprived Dom Miguel of his hopes. The united forces of Spain and Portugal defeated him at Aceiceira, and compelled a retreat to Evora, where he signed a convention, by which, in return for a pension and for an amnesty for his followers, he engaged to retire from Portugal. Tranquillity was thus restored to the kingdom. Nor did the death of Dom Pedro, which occurred soon after, bring any

A.D.

1832-33

1833

1834

A.D. 1834 renewal of the strife. Dom Miguel, indeed, prepared for the attempt, but the united voice of the Allies was against him, and the determination of England to act, if necessary, obliged him finally to abandon the design.

Donna Maria, whose throne had thus been established by a civil war, continued her reign in the midst of parties whose violence might have seemed to threaten the security of her power. The adherents of the new Charter were met by cries for the Constitution of John VI. upon the one hand and by the remnant of the Absolutists upon the other. Continuous revolutions followed; but the loyalty to the House of Braganza still remained unshaken, and no pretender was at hand to divide the allegiance. The fall of obnoxious ministers was held a sufficient triumph by the various factions; yet among the many names which these changes brought to the surface, hardly one can be said to deserve remembrance. They were men whose selfish ambition, and whose unscrupulous pursuit of power, weakened their country; and in the midst of misgovernment, taxation, and debt, the kingdom sank to be no longer considered in Europe. During the succeeding reign of Pedro V., the principle of government by parliamentary majorities appeared to gain ground, and the uneventfulness of his brief rule acquires some lustre from the harmony which seemed to unite the sovereign and the people. But again during the early years of Luis I. there were frequent and tumultuous changes of power. And though order latterly has been preserved, and Portugal is gradually establishing its reputation as a well-governed kingdom, it must need the lapse of further years before any judgment upon it can be regarded as certain.

V.

PRUSSIA.

PRUSSIA.



A.D.

A DEPENDENCY, remote and sterile, was able at the commencement of the 18th century to give a royal title to its possessors. The Electors of Brandenburg, became Kings of Prussia; and, as in the case of Holland, the name of a province was soon extended to be that of a country. But if the name of Brandenburg was thus obscured, its history was not forgotten; and it is in the rise and growth of the ancient Electorate that are to be traced the beginnings of the greatness which has since risen to its height in the modern Kingdom of Prussia.

Brannibor, a fortress of the Wends, was taken by 928-1130 Henry the Fowler, in 928. The conquest was annexed to the great Duchy of Saxony, and was ruled for two centuries by the Margraves of Salzwedel and their obscure lieutenants. Then came a time when Dukes and Margraves were alike extinct; and Albert, Count of Ascanien and Ballenstadt, a son-in-law of the last Duke, succeeded at the division of territory in obtaining the Margraviate. With him the real history of Brandenburg begins. It is now for the first time an

A.D. independent province ; and the town of Brandenburg,
 ——— instead of Salzwedel, becomes the seat of power. Dutch colonists were now invited to drain and people its swamps, and the disturbing Wends are no more heard of. Under Albert and his descendants, who
 1130-1320 ruled for another period of two hundred years, the importance of the country rapidly increased. Albert himself, at the Diet of Mentz in 1184, fulfilled the functions of arch-chamberlain of the Empire ; and his successors voted at least as early as 1247 as Electors. New conquests continued to be made ; and though a ruinous system of appanages divided the country, it had still, when the direct line of succession became extinct in 1320, become a prize which at once attracted competitors.

The great struggle for the Empire between Frederick of Austria and Louis of Bavaria was now at its height ;
 1323 and when the victory of Muhldorf had established a Bavarian upon the throne, a Bavarian received the Electorate. Three sons of the Emperor Louis in succession ruled over Brandenburg. They were strangers to the country, and anarchy rose rapidly beneath
 1373 them ; until at length the third was induced to part with his too troublesome possession, and to sell it to the Emperor Charles IV., who had already, in antici-
 1355 pation perhaps of such a purchase, secured by his Golden Bull its recognition as an Electorate. The rule of the Luxemburg family continued a period of decline. Sigismund, the son of Charles IV., to whom the province fell, was able by its vote to win for himself the Imperial crown ; but he entirely neglected its administration, and cared only for the money he

could raise upon it. Pawned and re-pawned, it became pledged at length, in 1411, to a Burggrave of Nuremberg; and four years later, for a further advance, was sold to him for ever. It was thus that the family which still holds it came into possession; for the Burggrave was Frederick of Hohenzollern, who becomes known henceforward as the Elector Frederick I. A.D. ——— 1415

The first mention of the House of Hohenzollern is found among the records of the Suabian feuds in the 11th and 12th centuries; and the situation of their castle, upon the southern slopes of the Black Forest, seems naturally to account for the connection. By 1170 a Frederick of Hohenzollern was Burggrave of Nuremberg, and was known as a man commanding the respect of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. Thenceforth successive steps, obtained from the friendship or the need of succeeding Emperors, continued to mark the rise of the House. The exertions of the Burggrave Frederick III., in the election of Rodolf of Hapsburg, were rewarded by his office being declared hereditary; those of Frederick IV., at Muhldorf, by the gift from Louis of Bavaria of all the Austrian prisoners, which became the origin of wide-spread claims to feudal superiority. About this time also the Hohenzollerns added largely to their territory. Baireuth had been seized in 1248, upon the death of the last Duke of Meran, whose daughter the Burggrave Frederick III. had married. Anspach and Culmbach were now bought; the former in 1331, the latter in 1338. The Hohenzollerns were already a power in the Empire, and worthy of its highest posts. One of

A.D. — them, the Burggrave John II., was strangely enough made deputy in Brandenburg for its Bavarian Elector ;
 1346 another, Frederick V., became Imperial Vicar and Landgrave of Elsass. Then came the election of Sigismund as Emperor ; and Frederick IV. of Nuremberg, who in every difficulty had given him his aid, was at once the readiest lender and the surest friend to whom to entrust the Electorate.

1417 Accordingly, in 1417, before 100,000 spectators, in the market square at Constance, where the great Council of Christendom was still sitting, Frederick received his investiture. As Elector, and intending to devote himself to his new province, he cared no longer to be Burggrave, and sold the office to the Nurembergers. Temperate, just, and firm in his dealings, he succeeded in reducing Brandenburg from anarchy to order. Already as deputy for Sigismund he had begun the task. Patience and conciliation had been his earliest steps ; and it was not until these had failed that he resorted to the strong hand of force. During
 1440-72 the reign of his son and successor, characteristically known as Frederick Iron-teeth, the strong hand was not relaxed ; and Brandenburg became thenceforward tamed to law and order. The Electorate, which during the preceding century had been curtailed by losses in war and by sales, began again to enlarge its borders. The New March, which had been sold in the days of
 1455 Sigismund to the Teutonic Knights, was now brought back from them in their need. The Duchy of Stettin,
 1464 upon the death of its last Duke, was claimed in virtue of an old treaty of reversion which had been made with Louis of Bavaria ; and though the war which

followed could not secure its immediate possession, it gained a compromise, by which the Duchy became at once a fief of the Electorate, and the eventual succession to it was assured. Albert Achilles, the brother and successor of Frederick II., was a man as powerful and as able as his predecessor. By his accession the principalities of Baireuth and Anspach, which had been separated from the Electorate for the younger sons of Frederick I., were re-united to it; and by a scheme of cross-remainders new plans were laid for the acquisition of territory, which bore their fruit as early as the succeeding reign in the small Duchy of Crossen. 1472-86

It was already understood that the Electorate was to descend according to the law of primogeniture; but Anspach and Baireuth were still reserved as appanages for younger sons; and upon the death of Albert Achilles, in 1484, his territories were again divided, and remained so for more than a hundred years. The result of the division, however, was to multiply and not to weaken the strength of the House. The earlier years of the 16th century saw the Hohenzollerns rising everywhere to power. Albert Achilles had been succeeded by John, of whom little is known except his eloquence, and by Joachim, who was preparing to bear his part against the Reformation. A brother of Joachim had become, in 1514, Elector of Mentz; and the double vote of the family at the election of Charles V. had increased their importance. The younger branch was rising also to eminence. George of Brandenburg, Margrave of Anspach, and grandson of Albert Achilles, was able in 1524 to pur- 1486 99 1499 1535

A.D. chase the Duchy of Jagerndorf in Silesia, and with it the reversions to the principalities of Oppeln and Ratibor, which eventually fell to him. His younger brother Albert, had been chosen in 1511 Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, and was already converting his office into the hereditary Dukedom of Prussia, which was to give an increase and a name to the territories of the head of his House.

PRUSSIA, rising thus to notice by the side of Brandenburg, demands a share of consideration. Its name, contracted from Borussia, has been supposed to express its neighbourhood to Russia; but its most important feature, geographically, was its line of coast along the Baltic sea. Christianity had been preached, 997 and its preacher, St. Adalbert, had been massacred in the 10th century. There had followed two hundred years in which the attempts at civilization had been few and unfruitful; and it was not until the necessities of the Poles had determined them to invite the assistance of the Teutonic Knights that any progress or even knowledge of the country was gained.

The Order which was thus introduced upon the scene had been originally founded in imitation of the older brotherhoods of the Temple and of St. John. 1189 The death of Frederick Barbarossa on his way to Palestine had left multitudes of his crusading host to the mercies of the sword or sickness before Acre; and among the foremost to relieve their fellows had been some citizens of the northern Hanse Towns, who had united with the brethren of an older German hospital

in Jerusalem, and became the founders of the new A.D.
 Order of German Hospitallers or Teutonic Knights. 1191
 As the position, however, of the Christians in the East
 became more hopeless, the seat of the Grand Master 1210
 was transferred from Acre to Venice; and when in
 1226 there came the appeal of Poland, supported by
 the approbation of the Emperor Frederick II., the
 Knights determined to remove from the Mediterranean
 to the Baltic, in the hopes of winning against Pagan-
 ism under a northern sky the successes which were
 denied to them against the Saracens.

Hermann of Salza, the first Grand Master who
 set foot in Prussia, was a man whom all his con-
 temporaries have agreed to honour. Under his rule
 the Order rapidly pushed on its conquests. Their
 first fortress was Nessau on the Vistula. Descending
 the stream, they gained the cities of Culm and Thorn; 1234
 and then Marienburg, still nearer to the Baltic,
 became their capital. Within ten years they had
 traversed the whole country between the Vistula
 and the Pregel. Livonia, Courland, and Lithuania,
 began to feel their presence; and the kindred but
 less powerful Order of the Cross and Sword was now 1237
 incorporated with them. Success, however, was often
 balanced by defeat. Their heathen enemies fought
 bravely; and if the ferocities of the Knights are
 dwelt upon, it may be believed that their opponents
 showed no greater mercy. The one side were mere
 savages, the other was being constantly recruited by
 the fiercer spirits of the age, who sought upon the
 battlefield an outlet for their restlessness. And the
 high chivalry, which had tempered and refined the war-

A.D. fare of the Christians of the East, was too often absent
— from these northern struggles.

As conquests were made, all such as chose to adopt the faith of the conquerors retained their lands, under the feudal obligation of battle for their lords; but the obstinacy of Paganism caused many to be slaves without claim or hope for mercy. Then towns were founded, to secure what had been won; and the rule that none but Germans should inhabit them secured the presence of a perpetual garrison to keep under the surrounding races. Thus, much as had been the case in the history of Brandenburg, the Order extended its power. The grants of the Emperor Frederick II., and of successive Popes, secured to it the sovereignty of all that might be won for Christendom; and the Knights therefore, in their corporate capacity, became the rulers of one of the principalities of Europe. Their best allies were now the Hanse Towns, from which they had first sprung. These fostered their power, by sending colonists to fill the towns. In return, the Order favoured trade. And though it was impossible that such a brotherhood should have retained in permanence the sovereignty of the soil, yet their tenure of it might have been prolonged had their administration been more prudent. Quarrels with Poland, however, became frequent; and a fatal
1410 defeat at Tannenberg in 1410 was the first blow that heralded the coming decline. Division and discontent were spreading in Prussia itself. A tyrannical and overbearing spirit, which had existed from the first, was now increasing; and the rule of the Order was harsh and unpopular. While still threatened by the

Poles, the Knights were called upon to meet a rising of their own provincial nobility. Later, the cities joined the nobles for the reformation of the Order, 1440 and for the protection of their own rights. The support of Poland in such a cause was readily obtained; and a furious war that lasted for thirteen 1454-66 years, followed. In the struggle the resources of the Knights were exhausted; the Grand Master was seized by his own mercenaries, and sold, together with the whole of Western Prussia, to the King of Poland; and the Peace of Thorn, which followed in 1466, compelled 1466 the Order not only to renounce the western half of their territory, but also to hold East Prussia as vassals to the Polish crown.

The sovereignty of the Teutonic Knights was ended, and their country had been made a desert. In the fierceness of the war 300,000 men and 18,000 villages are said to have perished. The pride of the Order had been extinguished; and with the loss of self-esteem there now came in the faults and vices which are recorded as the degradation of its later days. Of such extent indeed were these that the very dress became the shame and not the glory of those who should have worn it. A Grand Master, who should restore some dignity to the brotherhood, had at length to be sought among strangers; and it was thus that Albert of Brandenburg, in 1511, was called to the 1511 office.

Fallen, however, as the Order was, it had still the pride that murmured against vassalage; and Albert, like his immediate predecessor, had promised to refuse the homage to Poland. He struggled for a time to

A.D.

A.D. — fulfil his promise; but he could raise no army that could fight; even those who applauded him would give no help; and an armistice, which postponed the question, was all that he could obtain. It was clear that the homage must be paid. Meanwhile, however, the doctrines of the Reformation had been spreading; the tendencies of the Grand Master towards their adoption were stimulated by his difficulties; and a combination of motives produced a settlement in 1525 most memorable for the Order and for Brandenburg.

1525 Under this settlement, which is known as the Peace of Cracow, the Grand Master became hereditary Duke of Prussia, paying homage for it to Poland, and the resident Knights were transformed from life tenants into hereditary feudal proprietors under their new Duke. The change would have been valueless, if the religion which had made them celibates had not been changed also: but Albert and his followers at once adopted the Reformed faith; and in spite of the outcries of the foreign and Catholic members of the Order the secularization of Prussia was completed.

The new Duchy which had thus been created, the Duchy of Jagerndorf, and the Electorate of Mentz, had all been acquired by members of the House of Brandenburg within the first quarter of the 16th century. In the Reformation, the great question of the time, the influence of the family was now felt. Albert of Mentz is known as the Primate of the Empire, who sent forth both the Bull of Indulgences

and the Dominican monk who aroused Luther. Another, George of Anspach and Jagerndorf, became foremost upon the opposite side. Many and different causes were contributing to the same result, and extending the fame and power of the House.

A.D.
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The Elector Joachim I. of Brandenburg is perhaps 1499-1535 the least prominent, but was not the least prudent, of his family. Throughout his life he adhered to the old faith, and preserved his dominions in tranquillity. His son and successor, Joachim II., to the joy of his people, adopted the new religion; and found in the 1539 secularized bishoprics of Brandenburg, Havelberg, and Lebus, some compensation for the ecclesiastical Electorate which was about to pass upon the death of Albert of Mentz from his family. But he also was able to secure the continuance of peace. Distrustful of the success of the League of Smalkald he refused to join in it, and became chiefly known as a mediator in the struggles of the time. The Electors John George and 1571-98 Joachim Frederick followed the same policy of peace; 1598-1608 and the century rolled on, without events for history to record, but with a silent progress and with a development of strength. We read of a state council to assist in matters of law and of finance; of measures to increase the productiveness of the soil and to restrain the extravagance of its occupants. Education, even in earlier times, had been promoted by the foundation of the University of Frankfort on the Oder, in 1252; and now a new college was instituted

A.D. — for the special benefit of poorer students. In these ways the country was occupied, until at the opening of a new era it was called into more prominent and intimate connection with European questions.

Peace, and internal progress, had characterized the 16th century; war, and external acquisitions, were to mark the 17th. The failure of the younger line in 1603 caused Bayreuth, Anspach, and Jagerndorf to fall to the Elector Joachim Frederick; but as they were re-granted almost at once to younger sons, and never again reverted to the Electorate, their acquisition became of little importance. The Margrave, George Frederick, however, had held, in addition to his own territories, the office of administrator for Albert Frederick, second Duke of Prussia, who had become imbecile; and, by his death, the Elector of Brandenburg became next of kin, and claimed to succeed to the office. The admission of this claim placed the Electors in virtual possession of the Duchy. By a deed of co-infeoffment, which Joachim II. had obtained in 1568 from his father-in-law the King of Poland, they were heirs to the Duchy upon failure of the younger line; and the fact that they now became Regents for a sovereign long imbecile and without male heirs seemed to assure them the tranquil possession of their inheritance.

1618 Duke Albert II. died in 1618; and Brandenburg and Prussia were then united under the Elector John Sigismund. It was well that the Duchy had been secured before the storm which was already gathering over the Empire had burst. There were claims to other provinces, which had not met with the same

success, but were adding to the causes which involved the Electors in the Thirty Years' War. Duke William of Cleves and Juliers had died childless in 1609. By his father's will, the inheritance was to pass to his sisters and to their heirs general in succession; and the eldest of these sisters had been wife of Duke Albert II. of Prussia, and had left an only child who was now Electress of Brandenburg. It seemed clear therefore that the inheritance belonged to Brandenburg. But the Duchies in question were rich and fertile, they were full of the overflowing industries of Flanders, and they were traversed by the Rhine which brought and received their commerce. They were a different country from the distant, sterile, Prussia; and competitors at once arose for them. All Germany, said Henry IV. of France, claimed the succession. The Electress of Brandenburg, unfortunately, was daughter of a mother who was dead; and upon this plea the Count Palatine of Neuburg put in a claim in right of his wife, the eldest surviving daughter of the Duke, and nearer therefore to him by one generation than her niece of Brandenburg. Remaining sisters, regardless of any previous settlement, were urgent for a division. Saxon princes, French dukes, put forward claims to portions which under former rulers and old deeds had been exclusively limited to heirs male. And finally, the Emperor himself, unwilling that the Duchies should pass into the Protestant hands of Brandenburg or Neuburg, was desirous if possible to secure them for himself.

Of these claimants, however, the only ones whose action is worth noticing were the Elector of Branden-

A.D. ——— burg, the Count Palatine of Neuburg, and the Emperor. Within a fortnight of Duke William's death, the representatives of the two kindred Houses had arrived to take possession of the Duchies; and, while they debated over their claims, the Emperor sequestered the inheritance, and occupied the castle of Juliers with his troops. It was an act that not only united at once the rival claimants against him, and made them drive by force of arms his troops from the Duchies, but it gave umbrage to all the Protestant princes of Germany. Already symptoms of aggression on the part of the Catholics had appeared, and it seemed that this arbitrary sequestration was but a new step towards transferring the Duchies from Protestant into Catholic hands. There was more cause than ever for union. New members, including the Elector of Brandenburg, gave in their adhesion to the Evangelical Union which had already been formed in 1608. On the other hand a Catholic League developed. And in this manner, by increasing the divisions within the Empire, the affair of the Duchies contributed to the causes of the Thirty Years' War.

In 1618, the same year in which Prussia fell to Brandenburg, the Elector Palatine was chosen by the revolted Bohemians as their King. His defeat by the Imperial troops, his flight from Prague, and the confiscation of his Electorate, quickly followed: and in these misfortunes of a Protestant Prince, and in the triumph of a bigoted Emperor, were seen new causes for uniting the members of the Evangelical Union. The Elector George William of Brandenburg had received the fallen monarch, and had pleaded for him

with the Emperor; but his words had met with contempt, and the Electorate was given to a Catholic, the Duke of Bavaria. Alone of the German Princes, and with a spirit which he did not always retain, George William refused to recognize the new Elector. But he had not courage to support his refusal by war. The Protestant Union by this time was weakened; and the Imperial power was too strongly in the ascendant.

During the long struggle of the Thirty Years' War, the history of Brandenburg is that of a sufferer rather than an actor. George William did not dare to join in the confederacy that was led by Christian of Denmark, and had even to revoke his protest against the transfer of the Palatinate, when the troops of Wallenstein appeared at his gates. During this time the Electorate was traversed by the armies of both sides; its produce was consumed; and its losses were estimated at as much as 20,000,000 dollars. Then came the triumph of the Imperial power, and the proclamation of it in the Edict of Restitution, which was to resume for the 1629 Catholic Church all benefices secularized since the Peace of Passau in 1552. The bishoprics of Brandenburg, Havelberg, and Lebus, even Prussia itself, as a once ecclesiastical principality, were threatened. But the Edict remained unenforced; and George William did not stir. In the next year his trials painfully increased upon him. While the Imperialists still wasted his country, Gustavus Adolphus entered it. 1630 By an alliance with the Swedish King, there was the hope of securing the Protestant religion, and of defying the Edict of Restitution, which the Emperor was at this very moment preparing to enforce. But

A.D. George William hesitated and was afraid; he was jealous of the Swedish power; and he doubted between two masters. While the Imperialists were aided in their march, the Swedes were checked; and, as Gustavus waited for the fortresses which should secure his retreat, there came the news that Magde-
 1631 burg was sacked. The cry of horror rang through Europe; and men believed that history would have been spared the page of blood had it not been for the doubting policy of the Elector. Gustavus temporized no longer; but marched on Berlin, and extorted an alliance, which the Elector was now more afraid to refuse than to grant.

While the King of Sweden lived, George William found himself upon the conquering side; and the hopes of obtaining for his son the hand of the young Christina, with the empire of the North, encouraged him to support the alliance even after the field of Lutzen. But as these hopes faded, and as the Swedes were even proposing to retain possession of Pomerania, to which George William deemed himself the rightful heir, he wavered in his sympathies, and finally acceded
 1635 to the Peace of Prague, by which the Emperor agreed to defer the questions that had arisen out of the Edict of Restitution, and to assure the succession of Pomerania to Brandenburg. Thenceforth the anger of the Swedes was turned against him. Traversed and desolated by its late allies, the country was exhausted; and George William, who died in 1640, bequeathed a desert to his successor.

1640 That successor was Frederick William, to be known in history as the Great Elector. He now stood, at the

age of twenty, a prince without power, with enemies on every side, with no friends who could give him help. Peace became his object; and concluding a truce in 1643 with the Swedes, he secured the evacuation of the larger part of his dominions. Five years were still to run; and then all Europe, weary of the strife, had assented to the Peace of Westphalia, and the War 1648 of the Thirty Years was over. A.D.
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At the settlement that had been made the Elector had urged his claims to Pomerania. Duke Bogislaf, the last of his race, had died in 1637; and the possession of the Duchy, in accordance with ancient treaties, should from that time have belonged to Brandenburg. The Pomeranian coast, however, and the town of Stettin, were precious to the Swedes; and Frederick William unwillingly resigned himself to the acceptance of the lower portion only of the Duchy, with the possession of the secularized bishoprics of Halberstadt, Minden, and Camin, and the reversion to the archbishopric of Magdeburg, as a compensation for what he lost. He gained perhaps in reality by the exchange; for the new provinces extended his influence in central Germany, which a Baltic coast line, and even the navy, which alone of his family he appears to have coveted, could never have done. A further gain was also made in 1650, by a final settlement as to the disputed inheritance of Cleves and Juliers, which weightier matters had pushed aside. While Juliers, Berg, and Ravenstein, were assigned to the Duke of Neuburg, the Elector acquired the provinces of Cleves, La Mark, and Ravensburg. Already Brandenburg, among the German principalities, was nearest in extent

A.D. to Austria, and the Elector, like every other prince within the Empire, had shared in the new strength that had been gained through the weakening of the Emperor in the war that had just closed.

But the internal condition of the Electoral dominions was serious. The weak policy of George William had subjected his country to the alternate ravages of Imperialists and of Swedes alike. His people had been plundered of all they had; and the ravages of pestilence had followed upon the scarcity that had been thus produced. Numbers had fled from their afflicted country; their industry was thus lost; and the faint beginnings of trade and manufactures, which had sprung up, were checked before they could attain their development. Prussia on the east, and the debated Duchies of Cleves and Juliers on the west, had suffered equally with Brandenburg; the first from the invasion of Gustavus in the earlier war with Poland, the second from having been overrun by Dutch and Spaniards, who fought with eagerness against each other upon this neutral ground during their Twelve Years' Truce. A sovereign of no ordinary power was needed to give back prosperity to the country. The young Elector, however, proved equal to the task. Studying for the good as well as for the greatness of his people, his years of peace were made to yield results that are not less glorious than those of war. The re-peopling of a country, which had been wasted to the extent of almost half its inhabitants, was at once his earliest task, and the one which occupied even the latest years of his reign. Colonists were invited. The Dutch came, as their ancestors had

done before, from their own much peopled and much vexed dominions. All, even the Jews, were welcomed; and every encouragement was held out for the revival of industry and commerce. The prospects of favour and of toleration bore their fruit; and when the Edict of Nantes was revoked by Louis XIV., and the banished Huguenots sought a refuge in other countries, the Electorate was chosen by numbers of the exiles as the new field to which they were to transfer their homes and industry. With these accessions the nation and its commerce began to revive. Manufactures of woollen and cotton goods arose; the trades of the goldsmiths and watchmakers were found in Berlin; tobacco began to be cultivated; the sandy wastes of Brandenburg were made to produce abundance of vegetables; and the forests, that had sprung up during the periods of desolation, were cleared from the soil, and became another source of revenue through the sale of their timber. Improvements in the towns were also effected. The abolition of the tax on houses and town lands, which had pressed heavily upon the ruined cities, and the substitution for it of excise duties, created an influx of population, and houses everywhere began to arise. The streets, which before had often been impassable, were now paved and lighted. Communication throughout the country became organized: the posts were established; the great canal, which united the waters of the Elbe and the Oder, was cut, and ships from Hamburg and from Breslau met at Berlin. These were the works of peace, which have earned for Frederick William the grateful remembrance of his people, and which justify, as much as his wars, his title of the Great Elector.

A.D.

A.D. Yet war proved very glorious for Brandenburg.
— Within a few years from the Peace of Westphalia Frederick William had secured by it the independence of Prussia, and could proudly boast that he was the first of his family who had paid no homage for their dominions except to Heaven. Sweden and Poland
1656 were at war; and both had bidden for the support of the Elector. Frederick William, disposed at first to give his help to Sweden, had fought upon that side, and had received the promise of the full sovereignty of Prussia as his reward. New combinations, however, had arisen. The Emperor and the King of Denmark had supported Poland, and the Elector, apprehensive that his cause might be a losing one, and allured by equal inducements from what he now considered to be the strongest side, had deserted Sweden and gone over to the Poles. The policy was justified by the event: and the defeat and subsequent death of Charles X. were followed by the Peace of Oliva in 1660, which ratified the agreement that had been made between Brandenburg and Poland; and Prussia, released from its allegiance, again became a sovereign State.

The military spirit of the people had revived, and the Elector now took measures for its perpetuation. The Prussian army owes its origin to Frederick William. In spite of the remonstrances of his people, he organized a standing force, which should defend his widely separated dominions, and should add dignity to the Electorate by ranking it among the permanent military powers of Europe. The ambition of Louis XIV. was soon to show the value of such a

force. Already the princes of the Empire beheld his growing power with distrust; and when the United Provinces were invaded in 1672, and the Rhenish Duchies became threatened, Frederick William was the first to take up arms against the invader. In the war along the Rhine, which followed, the Elector saw his Duchies occupied by the French, and found his plans defeated by the lukewarmness of the Imperial generals. He was able to fight bravely, but not brilliantly, with such allies. The glory which he was to gain was to be in his own country, and amid the sympathizing efforts of his own people.

A.D.

Incited by the French, the Swedes invaded Brandenburg; and the Electorate was plundered by men who openly announced that they would not retire till Frederick William was at peace with Louis XIV. The few troops that had been left in the country were compelled to confine themselves to Berlin, and wait with impatience for the return of the army of Elsass. The Great Elector himself arrived with his reliefs in haste. No notice of his swift coming went before him. One garrison was surprised and made prisoners to a man. The rest were overtaken in their retreat, and 1675 defeated with great slaughter at Fehrbellin.

"Posterity," says Frederick the Great, "dates from this day the rise of the House of Brandenburg." The rapidity and success of this march was followed by an invasion of the Swedish territories, and by the conquest of the whole of Pomerania, which had been 1677 lost to the Electorate through the successes of Gustavus. Denmark united to confine the Swedes within their own peninsula; and the fleets of Holland aided her

A.D. allies upon the Baltic sea. When the Peace of
Nymegen came, it deprived the Elector of this help;
1679 and an article was inserted in it which stipulated that
Pomerania should be restored to the Swedes. Frederick
William, however, refused indignantly to give up his
conquests; and the war continued as before. A brilliant
descent upon Rugen was followed by the capture of that
island and the taking of Stralsund. The Swedes now
attempted to create a diversion by invading Prussia
from the east; but the active energy of the Elector
at once despatched a force to check their progress;
and, following himself soon after, he caused their
retreat into Livonia, with a panic and confusion more
fatal to them than any defeat.

The entry, however, of the French into Cleves, and
their insistence upon the terms of the Treaty of
Nymegen, showed clearly to the Great Elector that in
deference to the allies of Sweden he must forego many
of the conquests which he had made from her. Louis
XIV., at the height of his power, was pressing upon the
Electorate, and his troops had even penetrated as far
as Minden. The Empire on the other hand had become
jealous of the successes of Brandenburg, and refused
to assist a sovereign whom it termed a new King
1679 of the Vandals. Prudence compelled a peace; and
Pomerania was regretfully abandoned. The material
gains of the Elector became reduced to an unimportant
tract of country which was accorded to him, just
enough, as it was said, to remind him of what he had
lost. The glory, however, which his arms had won
remained, and could not be taken from him.

The wars of the Great Elector were over, but before

his reign was closed there had sprung up new seeds of strife which were to bear the deadliest fruit in the reign of his great-grandson. From all the schemes for internal prosperity with which the Elector occupied his later years, his attention was called to a question of foreign succession, which became the origin of the Silesian claims and the Silesian wars of Frederick the Great. Nearly a century and a half before, one of the ordinary deeds of cross-remaindership had been executed between the Elector Joachim and the Duke of Liegnitz, under which the Bohemian territories of the Elector and the Silesian ones of the Duke were destined to be united in favour of the surviving House. In 1675 the death of the young Duke of Liegnitz made the Great Elector heir under this deed; but the opposition which the compact had excited at the time of its execution, though it had since slumbered, was not extinguished; and, as in the days of the religious wars, so now it seemed intolerable to Austria that an encroaching power and a Protestant family should obtain a footing so dangerously near her own possessions. The Emperor accordingly took immediate possession of the country. But peace had given Brandenburg the opportunity for the assertion of her rights; she loudly preferred her claim; and added to it the demand for the restitution of the Duchy of Jagerndorf, which had been seized during the confusion of the Thirty Years' War. The result was negotiations, which ended in the cession to the Elector of the small circle of Schwiebus, in return for the abandonment of all his claims. But as, at the same time, the Austrian ministers took advantage of the

A.D. fears and inexperience of the Electoral Prince, to extort from him a promise of surrendering upon his accession the territories which his father now received, and as this promise, through the necessity of conciliating the Emperor, was eventually fulfilled, the only result of the negotiations was a postponement of the claims, to await their solution in a more favourable season.

There were other views than those of territorial acquisition which presented themselves to the son and successor of the Great Elector. Frederick III. was engaged indeed upon the Rhine in the cause of the Empire against Louis XIV., and commanded at the siege of Bonn. But neither his inclinations nor his opportunities were favourable to war. Ill health, and the coldness with which his father had regarded him, had perhaps contributed to dwarf his mind; and he remained throughout his life, as Frederick the Great has said of him, a man who was essentially little in great things, great only in little things. Yet even the smallness of his ambitions became conducive to the greatness of his country. Inclined to show and to magnificence, attracted by external pomp, which he was willing to believe in as substantial power, he set his mind upon the attainment of a royal crown, which should raise him from a mere Elector to the rank of King, and give a place to Prussia among the monarchies of Europe.

Many circumstances concurred to suggest the elevation. It had been promised, as is said, to the Great Elector. Around him Frederick beheld the princes of the Empire, from Holland, from Hanover, and from

Saxony, enjoying, or prepared to grasp, the crowns of England and of Poland; and he was eager that Brandenburg should boast an equal dignity. Bending therefore his whole mind to the congenial task, he set himself, regardless of discouragement, to the attainment of what was now the one great object of his life. He claimed that Prussia, as a sovereign Duchy, entitled him of right to a royal crown; and throughout was jealously observant lest any act or word should countenance the supposition that the dignity was due to others and not to himself. But he knew that the assumption of his rank would be vain, unless he could prevail upon the Emperor, as head of Christendom, to assent to his proceedings, and thereby secure to himself and his representatives the precedence which he desired. He strove therefore to win over the Imperial ministers to his views. The necessities of the time were in his favour. The Spanish succession was the question of the hour. Already treaties of partition had been signed for the dismemberment, upon the death of Charles II., of an inheritance which Austria claimed entire; and in the struggle that must ensue, the support of a military power, like Brandenburg, seemed cheaply purchased by the recognition of a title. The accession of England and Holland to the Imperial side, when the designs of Louis XIV. were proclaimed, gave new supporters to the Elector; and, by the close of the year 1700, the object of his ambition was, he saw, within his grasp.

On the 18th January, 1701, Frederick, in the symbolic assertion of his independent right, placed the crown upon his own brows at Königsberg, and with

A.D. his own hands crowned his Queen. He himself perhaps could hardly recognize the full importance of what he had attained. To him the royal title meant new pomp, new ceremonies, and outward show. To his descendants it meant more. It was, says Frederick the Great, as though the Elector spoke to his successors: "I have won the title; it is for you to prove worthy of it. I have laid the foundation; it is for you to finish the work." And so indeed contemporaries regarded the event. Some, through policy, might appear indifferent; but already Prince Eugene foresaw the growth of an antagonistic power in Germany, and declared that the Imperial ministers who had consented to the step deserved to be hanged.

The death of William III. of England, in 1701, gave the King of Prussia a claim in right of his first wife upon the hereditary dominions of the House of Orange. The war of the Spanish succession was now beginning; and the threat of deserting their cause made the Dutch acknowledge the claim. But Orange itself was at once seized by Louis XIV., in revenge for the accession of Frederick to the Grand Alliance. The generalship of the Prince of Anhalt, who commanded the Prussian forces upon the Upper Rhine, maintained the military reputation of the Great Elector's reign. Keyserwerth was taken; and a masterly retreat effected from the field of Hochstedt. At Blenheim the Prussians stood their ground with a firmness that put to shame the more wavering Austrians and contributed in no small measure to the defeat of the French. Frederick, pleased with the successes of his troops, and pleased also with the judicious flattery which Marlborough

used to gain his favour,* agreed to send the Prince of Anhalt and eight thousand men to Italy for the next campaign. The operations of this force at first were checked; but the victory of Turin, which was mainly 1706 due to them, redeemed their credit, and elicited the high honour of a personal encomium from Prince Eugene.

In the later campaigns the Prussian forces were chiefly engaged in the Low Countries; and at the battle of Malplaquet, where they again contributed to the successes of the day, the Prince Royal himself was present. As the prospect of a peace appeared, the King began to study his individual advantage, and threw garrisons into the cities of Gelders and Meurs. The Treaty of Utrecht, which at length ended 1713 hostilities, secured to him these possessions. By its terms Frederick received the Spanish Gelderland, in compensation for Orange and Chalons; his right to Neuchatel, which had adjusted itself to him as the nearest heir, was acknowledged; and his Royal title was recognized.

Before the Treaty was finally concluded, Frederick 1713 had expired. His reign of five and twenty years had been one of progress for his country, though that progress had been due to the times and to others rather than to himself. The years of internal peace had allowed the institutions of the Great Elector to flourish and be perfected. The virtue and talents of the Queen, Sophia of Hanover, had led her to encourage

* "Frederick I. was gained by Marlborough's mingling with his servants as he sat at table and offering him the napkin." Menzel, "History of Germany," cccxx.

A.D.

learning, and to assemble its professors about her court. The Royal Academy was her foundation; and to her exertions may be ascribed the University of Halle, which owes its existence to this reign. The reputation of Prince Leopold of Anhalt Dessau had sustained the fame of the Prussian soldiers in the field; and the acquisitions at the close of the war, with a few others that were gained in peace, formed valuable contributions towards the enlargement of the kingdom. Frederick himself, in fact, was rather the accidental instrument of his country's greatness than the cause of it. He valued his possessions so little that he would have parted with his principality of Halberstadt for the famous Pitt diamond; and he cared not sufficiently for his people to retrench in one single item the extravagance of his court, when the ravages of pestilence and famine had reduced Prussia to the depths of misery. His own character and that of his consort are shown in the dying words of the Queen herself. "Do not weep for me," she said, "for I go now to satisfy myself as to those things which Leibnitz never could explain to me—space, the infinite, existence, non-existence; and I leave to the King the ceremonials of my funeral, in which he will find a new opportunity for the display of his magnificence."

Under a new sovereign the court assumed a new aspect. Frederick William I. had far truer and more solid ideas of greatness than his father. The frivolities and expenses of the court disappeared; and the rule of economy succeeded to that of extravagance. The campaigns of the Low Countries had made the new

King acquainted with the organization of his army ; and he determined that, instead of wasting her strength for the rights of others, Prussia should become an independent Power capable of maintaining her own. His new regulations for the revenues, for the economy of his court, and for the discouragement of luxury, had all the same object, to increase the wealth of the nation, and provide for the support of his army. The passion for soldiers became even an eccentricity in him. His agents in foreign countries would kidnap men of size ; and no present from other sovereigns was so acceptable as that of a few recruits of six feet high for the Potsdam body guard.

The necessity of arming was forced upon Frederick William from the first. He was not a conqueror ; and he was a prudent and conscientious rather than an ambitious man. But the very earliest years of his reign were troubled with war ; and, though the remainder of it was a long peace, there were continued indications which confirmed him in his military preparations. His early and his only war was against ¹⁷¹⁵ Charles XII. of Sweden. During the retreat of Charles at Bender, stipulations had been made between Prussia, Russia, and Sweden, to ensure the neutrality of Pomerania, and thereby of Frederick William's adjacent provinces. But the return of the impatient King overthrew the arrangements of his ministers ; and Frederick William, by his engagements, and in defence of his own rights, was forced into a war, which ended in driving Charles from the continent and adding Stettin and the territory south of the river Peene ¹⁷²⁰

A.D. to Brandenburg. Then came considerations as to the effect on Europe, and on Brandenburg especially, of the approaching question of the Austrian succession. The line of Hapsburg was evidently about to fail. The Emperor had no male heir; and, though he was already busying himself to obtain the recognition by every Power of his daughter's claim, Frederick William could not but foresee the probability of strife in spite of treaties. His own dominions were scattered and exposed; he lay, as it were, upon the bridge of war, with Austria on the one hand, France and English Hanover upon the other; and the more dangerous his situation the greater preparation was required. In his own day the actual employment of these preparations was not required; but hardly was his successor seated on the throne than the death of the Emperor Charles VI. occurred, and Prussia leapt already armed into the field.

Frederick William was thus a preparer of conquests. Every department of the State was nerved and braced together for the same object. The improvement of land and of its produce, the prosperity of the towns, and the spread of manufactures, were all to contribute to the strength of the country. Refugees, who fled
1729 from the persecution that then disgraced the archbishopric of Saltzburg, were joyfully welcomed; and in return swelled the riches of the country and the ranks of its army. The King himself was the directing power in everything. Ministers, as well as private individuals, bowed before the stern discipline which the love of military organization caused him to adopt; and Prussia was converted, as Frederick the Great has

said, from being the Athens, into the Sparta of the North. Frederick William in fact was an autocrat. His treatment even of his own children was severe. But at his death he left to his successor a prosperous and contented kingdom, flourishing in its revenue, and supporting an army of nearly 80,000 men, which, from its discipline and organization, was to be the terror and admiration of Europe.

When Frederick II., hereafter to be called the Great, succeeded to this sovereignty in 1740, he was twenty-seven years old. The character of his father had kept him in the background, but all Europe looked with anxiety to see what the lord of such an inheritance would prove. The life of ease and literary retirement, in which he had indulged, was now at an end; and days of ambition and of strife were to succeed, which few could have prophesied from his earlier years. The death of the Emperor Charles VI., within six months of his own accession, gave him the opportunity which he required; and the love of fame, and the desire to make his young kingdom great, impelled him to step forward and share in the dismemberment of the Austrian possessions. His father indeed had guaranteed the Pragmatic Sanction, which recognized the claims of Maria Theresa, the daughter of Charles VI., to her inheritance; but he had done so upon the condition that upon the extinction of the Palatine house of Neuburg the possession of the Duchy of Berg, or an equivalent, should be secured to him; and Frederick now urged that the failure of the Imperial court to secure this had released him from his obligation. The old claims to the Silesian Duchies, which had slumbered

A.D. — through two reigns, were now revived; and the nearness of that province, and the thought that an attack upon it would awaken less jealousy in Europe than one upon Berg, caused Frederick to make choice of it as the scene of war.

1740 Within two months after the death of Charles VI. the King of Prussia had entered Silesia. Overtures had been made to Maria Theresa, now Queen of Hungary, with offers to espouse her cause against all other nations if the claims of Prussia upon the province were acknowledged; but the King's desire for war was sufficiently declared by the fact that he had entered Silesia before his ambassador had reached Vienna. The high unyielding spirit of the Queen refused Frederick's proposal; and he advanced along the Oder and occupied the country, leaving detachments to blockade the fortresses, which alone offered him resistance. As the Austrian forces advanced in 1741 from the south they were met at Molwitz, and the first of Frederick's battles was fought and won. The effect upon Europe was general. While England and Russia were eager to draw off so formidable a conqueror, France saw that as an ally he might aid her schemes for the humiliation of Austria; and treaties were soon framed which bound him to Louis XV. and the Elector of Bavaria. As her enemies surrounded her, the proud spirit of Maria Theresa bent itself at last to concession; but her offers were insufficient, and Frederick refused to listen. The court of Vienna began to despair. "No one is any longer for us," writes the Empress-Dowager; "our only consolation is that God can overthrow this second

Pharaoh." But they did not wait for the Divine interposition : the situation of their affairs was critical ; and they preferred to purchase a truce at once by the 1742 surrender of Lower Silesia. A.D.

The policy of Frederick was to secure a balance of power in Europe. The young shoot of Prussian greatness had been planted among powers of an older growth, whose shadow might threaten to dwarf if not to extinguish it ; and it was his aim to check the encroaching greatness of his neighbours, so as to secure an opening for the growth of his own kingdom. Throughout his reign he is seen as the Nemesis that attends on Austria or on France, as their successes threaten the independence of the Empire or of Prussia ; and in this, his earliest war, he showed at once the policy which was to guide him through his life. When Austria, relieved of her chief enemy by the truce that she had signed, began to revive, her successes in Bavaria and the support of England were enough to arouse against her the jealousy of Frederick, and he broke the truce unhesitatingly upon the plea that his condition of secrecy had not been kept. Leaving Silesia, the King advanced to renew the war in Bohemia and Moravia ; and, though unable to conquer these kingdoms, he won a new victory at 1742 Czaslau, which brought at once fresh offers from Vienna. Almost the whole of Silesia, both Upper and Lower, was now to be his ; and on this condition he signed the Peace of Breslau, which marks the close of the First Silesian War.

But within two years there was a renewal of strife. As Frederick watched the continued struggles of

A.D. Europe which centred around Austria and Bavaria, he saw the Emperor Charles VII., whom he had helped to raise to the throne, becoming weaker, and the power and arrogance of Austria growing every day more formidable. He heard of schemes which were to unite the Powers of Europe against him, and he foresaw the attempt to crush his rising kingdom and compel him to restore his newly won province. If the pre-eminence of Austria were to be averted, and her designs to be baffled, he must join at once against her; and putting forward therefore the cause of the head of the Empire as his own he again prepared to march into Bohemia.

1744 The Second Silesian War shows neither the acquisitions nor the glory of the First. In the campaign of 1744 the King invaded Bohemia; but, though the city of Prague surrendered, his movements were checked, and he found himself obliged to retreat and abandon
1715 his conquest. In the following year the Emperor Charles VII. died; and the reconciliation of his son with Maria Theresa caused France to be less eager for the war. Saxony too had joined with Austria; and Frederick felt that his situation was critical. The victory of Hohenfriedberg, however, as the Austrians pressed forward in Silesia, gave him a new life. Then came another triumph, invited by the presumption of his enemies, at Sorr; and finally the defeat of the Saxons by his troops at Kesseldorf, and the surrender of Dresden, enabled him at the close of the year to secure a peace which confirmed him in the possession of Silesia.

While his dominions had been thus extended in the

heart of Europe, a small acquisition in the north-west was opening to him the prospect of new power. East Friesland, on the extinction of its princes in 1744, had fallen to him as the reversionist; and its harbours, the first which Prussia had yet held upon the open seas, gave hopes, that were to be, however, but partially fulfilled, of some share in the commerce of the world. Frederick turned with the energy that he had shown in war to the occupations of peace. To develop trade, to encourage manufactures and the cultivation of the soil, to regulate taxation, and reform the laws, was to make his country prosperous, and to fit it for future trials. He could hardly hope that Austria would not again attempt to recover her lost territory, and he made the days of peace a preparation for those of war. The army received especial care; the arsenals were filled; the Silesian fortresses were strengthened; and a special war fund was accumulated; so that, in the King's own words, Prussia was prepared to take the field upon the first signal, and measure her strength with the foe.

Ten years of peace and preparation thus elapsed, and then began the Seven Years' War. In 1755 the King was watching with anxiety the course of the disputes between France and England as to their American boundaries. He saw that war was imminent, and that the connection of Hanover with England would bring it to his very doors; and for the sake of mutual advantage he allied with George II., in the hope of preserving the Empire in peace. But he thus drew upon himself the hostility of Louis XV., who had hoped to find in him an ally for his designs; and

A.D. the intrigues of Austria, still longing for revenge, were able now to accomplish an alliance between Vienna and Versailles. Promises and hopes drew Sweden, Saxony, and Russia, into the same combination; and Frederick now found himself with enemies on every side, all eager for their spoil in the dismemberment of his dominions.

Throughout the war which followed, the central figure is that of the King of Prussia, and the central strife is that which was waged in Saxony and Silesia. Around the two persistent enemies are grouped surrounding nations: the French and English, on the west, engaging in a strife which so fully occupied them as to give them little time for aiding their allies; the Swedes invading Pomerania upon the north, but with strength so insufficient and organization so incomplete as to be powerless for any great results; and the Russians hovering like a dark cloud upon the east, occupying Prussia, descending occasionally with crushing weight upon Frederick, but uncertain in their action through the divided sympathies of their court, and bearing therefore in comparison with Austria only a secondary share in the war. Such is a rough sketch of the position of the nations who shared in the Seven Years' War.

1756 The beginning was made by Frederick himself. Surrounded by contriving enemies, he determined to be the first to act. Though war had never been declared, he marched on Saxony, and by the publication of the intrigues revealed in the archives of Dresden he justified his occupation of that kingdom to the world. The surrender of the Saxon army, and the

defeat at Lowositz of the Austrians, who had marched to their relief, secured to him the possession of the country, and opened the way into Bohemia. The following year, however, the clouds had gathered round him. His advance into Bohemia, and his siege of Prague, were followed by a defeat at Kollin; in Prussia Proper his troops were conquered by the Russians at Gross Jagersdorf; and Pomerania was invaded by the Swedes. While his enemies were thus surrounding him, his friends were deserting him; for the English, after a defeat at Hastenbek, had signed the convention of Closter Seven; and he was alone therefore among his foes. But the close of the campaign revived his prospects. At Rossbach, in Saxony, he routed the French, in a battle that was not revenged till Jena. Then flying to Silesia, he inspired new courage in his disheartened troops, and won at Leuthen a victory which with more daylight must have been the most decisive of the age, and which compelled the Austrians to evacuate the whole of the province. With the French and Austrians defeated, with the knowledge that he might despise the ill-organized incursions of the Swedes, and with the hope that the dissensions of their court and the bribes of England would paralyse the Russian army, Frederick might hope at least to hold his own.

The victory at Rossbach, he said, had merely given him the power to fight again; but it had really done much more. It had revived his fame in Germany, and it had restored to him his English Allies, who, encouraged by his success, repudiated their convention, and invited Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick to

A.D.

1757

A.D. command their troops. The support which Frederick
 — thus received became most valuable in the ensuing
 1758 year; for while the English engaged the attention of
 the French upon the west, the King was able to
 devote himself to the south and east. The balance,
 however, was still to remain even; for, if the Russians
 were defeated at Zorndorf, the King was surprised
 and routed by the Austrians in his camp at Hochkir-
 chen; and the numerous sieges which were begun and
 raised are a proof that there was little superiority to
 be claimed on either side.

Three years had thus elapsed, with general exhaus-
 1759 tion, but with no such triumphs as to compel a peace.
 The campaign of 1759 was to be more decisive, and
 to shake to its foundations the Prussian monarchy.
 The Austrians had at length perceived that they
 must unite their forces to those of their allies, and the
 Russians were preparing for a more vigorous attack.
 Frederick indeed was still defended upon the west by
 the English army, which won the victory of Minden;
 but his troops were repulsed by the Russians at
 Zullichau, and he himself, unable to prevent their
 junction with the Austrians, was so entirely defeated
 at Cuncersdorf, that a pursuit might have annihilated
 his army and left his whole kingdom at the mercy of
 the foe. It was a time when he himself despaired;
 and, had not the inaction of the Russian general
 preserved him, the war must have been ended. He
 escaped, however, with the loss of Saxony, which the
 Austrians had occupied so soon as their way to it was
 1760 opened. But the following year was still a continua-
 tion of disaster. While struggling doubtfully against

the Austrians, Frederick heard that the hovering cloud of Russians had descended upon Berlin ; and abandoning the south he rushed to its defence. He found indeed that his capital had fallen ; but the retreat of the invaders, after they had extorted a ransom, enabled him to return to Silesia ; and at length reviving fortune smiled upon him. While a new junction of his enemies and a repetition of the disasters of Cunersdorf was threatened, Frederick was prompt enough to attack the Austrians alone, and their retreat from the bloody field of Torgau gave all Saxony, with the exception of Dresden, again into his hands.

The balance had in a measure been restored ; and for two more years the war lasted. But the terrible exhaustion of both sides deprives these later campaigns of the fearful interest which the magnitude of earlier operations had excited. Frederick found that his enemies were still too strong for him. His country had been devastated ; and provisions, horses, and recruits, alike failed him. His army now consisted of a mixed multitude of peasants, deserters, and foreigners, and he was obliged to reserve their efforts for his great emergencies. He was compelled to see ¹⁷⁶¹ the Austrians advancing in Silesia, and the Russians threatening even Brandenburg from Pomerania. He lost also the subsidies of England, which a new ministry withdrew from him. But in the darkness of his prospects an event occurred which proved to be salvation. The Empress Elizabeth of Russia died ; ¹⁷⁶² and the ardent admiration of her successor for Frederick at once converted the Russian troops from

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enemies into friends. It was an event that turned the fortune of the war, and hastened the conclusion of a general peace. Relieved from half his enemies, the King could now press forward in Silesia; and, driving back the Austrians, he recovered the important fortress of Schweidnitz from their hands. His bitterest and most uncompromising enemy was gradually isolated; for Sweden followed the example of Russia in withdrawing from the war, and France concluded a peace with England. Then Frederick, by an incursion into Franconia, struck terror into the princes of the Empire; and at length the desire for peace, which so many had long felt, became
1763 unanimous. At Hubertsburg the Empire, Austria, and Prussia, were reconciled; and Frederick again received the confirmation of his old conquest, in exchange for his vote at the election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans.

Such was the end of the Seven Years' War. Frederick had been tried in the furnace; and, though the smell of the fire had indeed passed over him, he had not only escaped being consumed, but had approved himself and his country in the eyes of Europe. The Power that had stood alone against so many nations was at least a match for any single one of them; and Prussia, from a petty State, now rose to take her place among the foremost kingdoms of the world. She owed her greatness to the unconquered energy of her King. Alone, and with none but his own army, he had repulsed the united forces of the Empire, Austria, Saxony, Sweden, and Russia. It was on the west alone that he had been

relieved in any degree from the necessities of defence ; for there the allied army of English, Hanoverians, and Hessians, had kept the French in check. That Prussia should have had the power to sustain such a war seems marvellous. The calculations of Frederick himself show that the country had lost a hundred and eighty thousand men, while the whole population at the time of his accession had not exceeded two millions and a quarter. It may be supposed that, as in the days of his father, at least a third of the army was composed of foreigners ; but even with these recruits it has been seen that men failed him. His finances, too, had been severely tried. The revenues of his own dominions, together with those of Saxony and the English subsidies, had been insufficient ; and the coin had been debased to half its value, while the pensions of the civil list had been suspended, in order that all available resources might be secured for the war.

Yet when the Peace was signed the King congratulated himself that his was the only kingdom that was out of debt. He had been able to effect this by ordering all his revenues to be paid in advance ; and he had consequently always had a year's income in hand. Now, though the war had ceased, he still found ample scope for the employment of his riches. The great depopulation of his dominions claimed his earliest care. Numbers had left their country in despair ; others, from utter hopelessness, were even now upon the point of leaving it. Houses had been burnt ; fields had been wasted ; plunder and taxation had exhausted the means which might have repaired these

A.D. injuries; and neither men nor horses were to be found for the work of restoration. Money, the first of all necessities, was accordingly either lent or given to the different proprietors by the State; one-fourth of the soldiery were disbanded to become field labourers; new settlers were everywhere encouraged; and the landowners, having thus the hope and the probability set before them of retrieving their condition, now ceased to be desirous of abandoning their country, and worked in earnest for her good. Manufactures followed; for the enrichment of the individual as well as of the State. There was nothing to which Frederick did not put his hand; and the prudent economy with which his designs were carried out contributed in no small measure to their success. The division of land, the rearing of cattle, the supply of timber, and the reclaiming, draining, and fertilization of the soil, all received his attention. The old saying, "Omnia Cæsar erat," might well be applied to him, for in peace as well as in war he was ready to direct everything. Education too began to spread; the country villages received teachers, and the various colleges in the towns were remodelled and improved. The crimes and violences, which the days of anarchy had occasioned, were checked; and the strictest provision was made for the due enforcement of the laws. These measures caused the country to revive; and though their execution and its results were spread over the space of full ten years, it is not too much to say that a less energetic spirit than that of Frederick would have prolonged the recovery of his country much further.

The public moneys also increased with the general prosperity. The supply to meet the various calls was at first deficient, and the need was aggravated by the necessity of re-establishing the coinage upon a proper basis. A paper currency was established, which gave a partial relief; high customs duties were imposed; tobacco became a government monopoly; and the establishment of a bank, for the first time, became a source of revenue to the crown.

While such peaceful measures were in progress, it might be thought that the army would receive less attention. The war, however, so far from perfecting the royal troops, was considered by the King to have entirely destroyed their discipline. Of those who had served at the commencement of it hardly a hundred were now remaining; and the regiments had been made up from every source, and, above all, were wanting in proper officers. The first step was to reduce the army to a peace footing of 151,000 men. These were to be drilled continually; spring and autumn reviews were instituted to test their efficiency; and the officers were compelled to go through a course of military study, towards which the King himself furnished text-books. "Thus," says Frederick himself, quoting complacently the words of Vegetius, "peace became the school, and war the exercise, of the Prussian armies."

It seemed within a few years as if this exercise was again about to begin. The disturbed condition of Eastern Europe gave cause for anxiety. But Prussia and Russia were now allies; and the sacrifice of Poland, by securing to each neighbouring Power the

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spoils of conquest without its perils, became the means of averting war. The partition of the devoted kingdom is memorable in European, but especially in Prussian history. It is ever upon the ruins of other nations that a rising people builds up its greatness; and the provinces which slip from the loosened diadem of one sovereign are but transferred to shine with greater lustre in the firmer setting of another.

Augustus III. of Saxony, the King of Poland, had died in 1763; and the Empress Catherine of Russia had succeeded in placing a favourite of her own, Stanislaus Poniatowski, upon the vacant throne. From that time the independence of the kingdom was lost. The protecting Empress soon made demands for the religious equality of the Greek with the Latin Church; and, when the unwilling Diet had assented to her demand, her troops appeared to aid in quelling the disturbances of sectarian strife. It happened in the war which followed that the Russians pursued their enemies across the Turkish frontier, and the little town of Balta was burnt. The violation of their territory impelled the Turks to declare war; and the consequent advance of the Russians into Moldavia extended the area of strife. Austria, in her turn, became alarmed at the progress of a formidable Power; and there seemed the prospect of an alliance between the Emperor and the Sultan, to counterbalance that of Catherine and Frederick in the north.

The threatening aspect of affairs, the disinclination of Frederick for war, and his unwillingness to behold the undue aggrandisement of Russia, suggested the partition of Poland. It was to be the means of peace,

by giving to Russia the increase of territory which her successes made her claim, while at the same time it was to provide a compensation for Austria and Prussia. Devised by Frederick and Catherine, acceded to by Maria Theresa, the scheme was rapidly developed; and the three greatest sovereigns of the age united before a supine Europe in an act which even its originators could not defend in the name of justice but only in that of expediency.

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The First of September, 1772, was named as the 1772 day upon which the three Powers should enter upon their respective portions; and a notification was sent to the King of Poland requiring him to convoke a special Diet to approve the arrangements. When the assembly was convened, three separate armies of 10,000 men were marched into the country; and, after a momentary hesitation, the vain protest of patriotism was overpowered by the presence of foreign armies and by foreign threats, and the powerless Diet was compelled to adopt the decree which provided for the dismemberment of their country.

Poland indeed remained a kingdom; but it was a kingdom upon sufferance, and reduced by half its territory. Whether Frederick had actually been the first proposer of its destruction or not, there is no doubt but that he reaped the chief advantage. His share might be the smallest in extent; but through its position, its trade, and its population, it was the most important. All Western Prussia, the lost province of the early Knights, now became his: the link, long wanted, to connect his far-off kingdom with Brandenburg was at last supplied; and from Berlin to

A.D. — Konigsberg his sway was uninterrupted. When it is remembered how isolated the kingdom of Prussia Proper had been, how impossible it was to defend it, and how it had had to be abandoned to the Russians during the Seven Years' War, the great importance of the acquisition is seen. Again, the command of the Vistula, that was now gained, was important. The Memel and the Inster were the first, but the Vistula became the greatest, of the three lines of defence upon the east for the whole of Frederick's dominions. It secured to him besides the command of trade : he was master of all the Polish produce ; and could stop, if necessary, the supplies of corn which that kingdom exported.

The acquisitions of the reign were over, and the later years of the great King were almost entirely devoted to the internal administration of his dominions. There still remained before him the idea that Austrian pre-eminence must be checked ; and in 1778 his armies entered Bohemia, to fight for the cause of the Elector of Bavaria. But the war was little more than a campaign of observation ; and peace was made before any decisive action had been fought. The same idea in 1785 originated the formation of the Germanic Union, which opposed to the designs of Joseph II. a confederation of Princes, under the leadership of Frederick, for the defence of the constitution of the Empire. The Reformation had dealt the first and the heaviest blow to German unity ; and the ambition of Joseph II., encountering a Power like that of Frederick to oppose it, caused the division to become systematized, and prepared the way for the open rivalry between the two Powers.

On the 17th of August, 1786, the reign of the A.D.
greatest of the Prussian sovereigns was at length 1786
brought to a close. He had ruled for six and forty years, during which the greatness and prosperity of his kingdom had been the one object of his aim. Absorbed in that object, he had considered little else, and as a politician had not hesitated over acts which the world might deem unscrupulous, but which he himself could only view as the inevitable necessities of his position, as the means whose consideration could never be allowed to thwart the fixed and all-important end. In his heart Frederick was just. The poor man loved him, because he knew that in his hands a cause was safe, and that the right of the peasant was as dear to him as that of the noble. But in his dealings with foreign Powers the individual man was lost in the representative of the nation; and nations, as has been said, can have no conscience. There is no space, however, and there is no necessity, for dwelling here upon the details of his character. It is enough that in a great reign he stands alone, the one conspicuous figure in it. No prompting minister or rival general obscures his fame. And if the name of Prussia became glorious, if her strength and her prosperity increased, if her territory was extended, these are assuredly sufficient proofs of the greatness of the man who by himself could thus make great a nation.

The nephew that succeeded to the throne inherited 1786
but little of the energy either of his uncle or of his grandfather. But the character of his people had been formed; Prussia was now essentially a military

A.D. — monarchy; and though her sovereign might be unwilling or incompetent to lead, he was yet obliged to conform to the disposition of his subjects. The first years of the reign, however, were a melancholy contrast to those which had preceded them. Frederick William II. at once let slip from his grasp the whole power and control which the great Frederick had so jealously retained. The vices, the extravagances, and favouritisms of a corrupt court seemed about entirely to overcloud the Prussian throne. "Never was a government so near to ruin," wrote Mirabeau. The King resigned himself to indolence and pleasure; and the State was left in the hands of men, who, by their ignorance or their depravity, were leading it to its fall.

But there was happily not time for such a consummation to be reached. The storm of revolution in France arose; and the kingdoms of the East as well as of the West began to see that the time for serious counsel, if not for action, had arrived. The cry for liberty and for the rights of men might shake the thrones of other sovereigns as well as that of Louis XVI.; and the kingdoms of Eastern Europe, in making cause against the common enemy, might be at once securing their own safety, and might also indulge in the hope of increasing their dominions. With Prussia there was present also the inducement of finding 1791 employment for her army; and at Pillnitz, in 1791, the league was formed which united her with Austria and the *émigrés* against the Revolution.

The days of war were to begin again, but those of glory were not to be recalled. The campaigns of the Allies were eminently fruitless; the declaration that

they would raze Paris to the ground, unless it submitted to its King, revolted the proud spirit of the French; they deposed their sovereign, and prepared with fresh obstinacy for resistance. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, the commander of the Allied forces, gained no addition to the thick laurels which he had acquired in the events of the Seven Years' War. He failed to advance into the heart of France, when success might have been possible, and retreated ingloriously after a few successes to the Rhine. In the following year 1793 the strong town of Mentz was taken by the Prussians; but the successes of the war were confined to this solitary conquest. Frederick William, in truth, was but half-hearted in the cause. The prospect of a new partition of Poland was engaging his attention; and, had it not been for his fear that Austria, left alone, might extend her influence too powerfully upon the Rhine, he would have withdrawn entirely from the struggle in the West.

A new Constitution, which had been adopted in Poland, had given offence to the Empress Catherine of Russia. The King of Prussia had guaranteed its observance; but, unscrupulous as his uncle had ever been, he revoked his word before the inducements that were held out to him. The devoted country was 1793 again partitioned in 1793; and Prussia gained Thorn and Dantzic, Posen and Kalisch, as her share. It was hardly to be expected, however, that in an age of insurrection the Poles would submit as tamely as before to their spoliation; and a revolt under Kosciusko followed. While Prussian forces still remained upon the Rhine, the King of Prussia entered Poland and

A.D. besieged Cracow. The Poles fought bravely, but in
 ——— vain. The armies of Russia united against them ; and
 1795 their resistance only sealed their doom. In 1795 the
 third and final partition was made. The three sove-
 reigns of Prussia, Russia, and Austria, divided what
 was left of the unhappy kingdom ; and again the
 territory of Prussia was extended by the acquisition of
 the provinces of Warsaw and Bialystock.

In the West, the Reign of Terror was by this time
 at an end ; and Frederick William seized the moment
 to make peace with the French Republic. He had
 too much upon his hands ; and he now hoped to gain
 as great advantages by his diplomacy as he could do
 by war. By a secret article, he withdrew all opposi-
 tion to the extension of the French frontier to the
 Rhine ; and he received the promise in return of an
 indemnification at the expense of the smaller German
 States. It is more than doubtful whether this would
 ever have been secured to him. Distrust, at all
 1797 events, after the partition of Northern Italy, by the
 peace of Campo Formio, began to arise ; and in the
 fear that Austria and France were now confederates,
 and with the determination not to be the losers, the
 troops of Frederick William overran Franconia and
 seized Nuremberg. The annexations of Frederick the
 Great were perhaps heartless and unjustifiable ; but
 those of this reign had even less excuse. They had
 less regard for the most solemn engagements ; and they
 were done at a moment when every German Power
 should have put forth her strength for the defence of
 Germany and none for strife within her.

1797 The death of Frederick William II., in 1797, left the

kingdom enlarged, but its resources exhausted. The reign had been one not only of war but of extravagance; and the lavish expenditure of a luxurious court had contrasted strangely with the economy of the years that had preceded it. The accumulated treasure, which had been left by Frederick the Great, amounting to £12,000,000, had been expended, and an additional million and a half of debt was weighing upon the country. The national character as well as the finances had suffered; and, at a time when all resources should have been available to resist a foe, the kingdom was weakened and impoverished, and began to adopt a temporizing policy, which proved the ruin of Germany and well-nigh of herself.

Frederick William III. began reforms, but was unable to enter into war; and the still existing jealousy of the power of Austria confirmed him in refusing the alliances which might have checked the French encroachments. Peace gave him the opportunity of repairing his exhausted treasury; and, while siding with neither party, he indulged the hope that his neutrality would be rewarded by some share of the dominions which might be at the disposal of the conqueror. He saw the French becoming masters of the Rhine; he saw the campaigns of Italy and Switzerland, and the defeats of Marengo and Hohenlinden. He then began to range himself more openly with the conqueror; he acceded to his league against England, and was allowed to occupy the long-coveted soil of Hanover. The disquieted condition of Germany, the cession of the Rhenish provinces to France, the fall of the free cities and of the ecclesiastical princi-

A.D. — palities, still failed to excite sufficient apprehension in him. His armies indeed were in the field; but he preferred to make bargains for their neutrality, and not to engage them in the fight.

Years thus elapsed which are at least inglorious in 1804 Prussian history. In 1804 Frederick William saw the violation of German territory by the seizure of the Duke of Enghien, and in 1805 the occupation of his own much-coveted possession of Hanover by the French, in despite of the stipulations of the Peace of Luneville. He roused himself at length, but it was late. The eve of Austerlitz had come; and the envoy, who arrived upon the field to declare war against the French, departed having offered them his congratulations. Prussia seemed at length to reap the reward of her inaction: the possession of Hanover was confirmed to her. But the triumph was a short one. The Confederation of the Rhine followed. Then came the resignation of the Imperial Crown by Francis II.; and Napoleon seemed virtually to have obtained the empire over Germany as well as over France. The petty kingdoms were his vassals. Prussia, the chief of them, had now to obey his will. She began to feel that her schemes of self-aggrandisement were ending in abasement. Her commerce suffered through the enforcement of the Continental System; the enemies of France became her enemies; and finally she saw that even the very Power with whom she had allied was planning to isolate and to betray her, and was even offering to restore Hanover again to England as a condition of peace.

1806 With the courage of despair she asked for the

evacuation of Germany by the French, and for the establishment of a Northern Confederacy which should balance that of the Rhine. The immediate rejection of such a demand naturally followed; and Frederick William declared war. The fate of his kingdom was speedily decided. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick attempted to cut off the army of Napoleon from France. He found his schemes retaliated upon himself, and Berlin threatened. As he retreated, his detachments separately were repulsed; the communication with his magazines was lost; and the almost simultaneous battles of Jena and Auerstadt defeated his own army and that of the King with disastrous loss. Berlin was at the mercy of the conqueror; and the sword of the great Frederick, a trophy of success, was sent to Paris from his tomb.

While Napoleon ruled in Berlin, the King retired beyond the Vistula with the remnant of his troops, and refused to accept the humiliating terms of the conqueror. He was now supported by the Russian armies. Since the defeat of Austerlitz the Emperor Alexander had endeavoured to repair his strength, and the contest was now continued by his arms. The French advanced through the eastern provinces of Prussia. But the smaller measure of success which now attended their progress, the bloody and indecisive 1807 battle of Eylau, and the inaction of four months which followed, gave rise to hopes that the star of their ascendancy was waning. The allies of Alexander, however, were too frugal or too timid to support him; and when the Russian armies had been defeated at Friedland, their Emperor cared no longer

A.D. — to prolong a doubtful strife. The last hopes of Frederick William were thus disappointed, and he accepted of necessity the terms prescribed for him at Tilsit.

Prussia felt the fate of Poland. She was a kingdom upon sufferance. Half her possessions were surrendered. What she had held upon the left of the Elbe became the new kingdom of Westphalia; what she had acquired in Poland was transferred to Saxony. The army was reduced to a footing of 42,000 men. A contribution of nearly £6,000,000 was demanded. Her people were exposed to insult and oppression; and the iron entered into her soul.

The whole kingdom had been subdued within a year. But the tide of fortune had reached its lowest point; and from this moment it began to turn. The whole nation seemed to realize that the time had come when soberly and seriously they must set to work if they would any longer remain a people. From the depth of their degradation the work of reorganization and of reform was begun. The days of vacillation were over; new counsellors were called to the throne; and Frederick William himself stood forward a changed man. The Constitution was remodelled; the rights of election and representation were granted; the vices of a court and the despotism of an aristocracy disappeared; villenage was abolished. Men were encouraged in these ways to feel that the country was their own, and no longer the private estate of a few proud nobles. Patriotism revived. Secret societies and songs were framed, to fan the love of the old Fatherland, and to encourage the desire

for freedom. The army also was reformed. Till now its officers had always been elected from among the nobles; and in the degeneracy and corruption of the order many had proved themselves to be but incapable tyrants. Their places were now opened to others. At the same time the system of the Landwehr, which has since given such greatness to Prussia, was instituted, so as to insure a military training for the nation without violating the restrictions imposed by the conqueror upon the numbers of the army. In these ways, and under the care of the ministers, Hardenberg, Stein, and Scharnhorst, whose names deserve to be remembered, preparation was silently and surely made for the day when Prussia might once more rise again among the nations.

A.D.
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When Austria ventured again in 1809 to struggle for her freedom, the sympathy of the Prussian people was with her; but they were powerless to aid in the fight; their fortresses were occupied, and their country exhausted. The time had not yet come. Before it came, they found themselves even ranged as allies, or rather vassals, in the train of their oppressor. They were called upon to share in the Russian war. 1812 Powerless to refuse, their army was led forth under the command of a French general, and twenty thousand Prussians besieged Riga. But they escaped the march to Moscow, and the disasters which that march entailed. From their side-post they saw the retreat of the French armies; and then at length their time for vengeance seemed to have come. Instead of aiding their allies, they signed at once a treaty of neutrality with the Russians; and though the King,

A.D. who was still at Berlin and in the power of the
— French, disavowed their act, yet, as soon as he could
1813 fly to Breslau, he joined in the wishes of his whole
people, and concluded an alliance offensive and
defensive with Russia.

The cry became universal. Every class came forward to aid by their arms or by their contributions in the War of Liberation. For a time, however, the fate of Germany was doubtful; and it was not until the accession of Austria to the Grand Alliance, in August, 1813, that hope began to ripen into confidence. The successes of Napoleon were then more than counterbalanced by those of the Allies. The French armies still remaining in Bohemia, Silesia, and in Brandenburg, were driven back. New enemies began to declare themselves; and Napoleon, reluctantly abandoning the hope of conquest, gave orders for a retreat towards the Rhine.

The famous defeat of Leipzig, the pursuit which shattered the remains of the French army, the crossing of the Rhine, and the march on Paris, are events in which the troops of Prussia bore an honourable part, and in which the energy and the decision of the veteran Marshal Blucher, their commander, conspicuously aided the designs of the Allies. Meanwhile the fortresses upon the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, which were still held by the French garrisons, were gradually subdued, and the deliverance of the country was completed.

1814 Prussia entered upon the congress at Vienna, having made atonement by her sufferings and by her repentance for her earlier errors. Before the negotiations

could be far advanced she had earned for herself a new claim to the gratitude and to the respect of Europe. The return of Napoleon had been followed by his march on Belgium. The troops of Prussia had shared with those of England the honour of resisting him, and had turned the fortunes of the day at Waterloo. She emerged at the close of the congress restored and rewarded for her exertions. The Grand Duchy of Posen, half of Saxony, Swedish Pomerania, with the isle of Rugen, almost the whole of the Lower Rhine, from Mentz to Aix-la-Chapelle, and the important coalfields of the Saar, became, by the voice of Europe, recognized and integral portions of the monarchy. The work of war was over, and it remained only to organize and to assimilate the kingdom in peace. A.D. 1815

A period of fifty years succeeds, during which no foreign enemy disturbed the repose of the kingdom. Prussia entered into the great German Confederacy that was formed in 1815, to give unity and strength to the Teutonic race. She entered also into the Holy Alliance with Austria and Russia, and bound herself to the cause of peace and justice. The promise of tranquillity and progress was, however, but partially fulfilled. The material prosperity of the country increased indeed amazingly. The great measures, which the necessities of the war had called forth, were now followed, under the direction of the great minister Von Stein, by the spread of municipal institutions, by improved facilities of communication, and by the compulsory diffusion of education. The universities of Berlin, Breslau, and Bonn, were founded, to be the

A.D. centres of learning for the widely scattered provinces of the nation. Population rapidly increased, and trade prospered. Content, however, was not diffused with prosperity. The government, which in its need had encouraged, and had even promised the fulfilment of many of the aspirations after freedom, to which the age of the revolution and the despotism of Napoleon had given rise, in its security returned to the conservatism of the past. No sooner had Waterloo been won than a change was apparent: the spirit of concession fled; and the contemplation of the revolutions, which in a few years succeeded each other in the south of Europe, confirmed the policy of repression. The promises of institutions or assemblies, which should be really representative, were evaded or broken. Provincial Estates, with power for merely local, not imperial, objects, were all that arose. Popular assemblies and expression of opinion were suppressed; and the freedom of the press was extinguished. The nation murmured at the disappointment of its hopes. It did not take courage, however, for thirty years to rise up and to demand their fulfilment.

Meanwhile, the antagonism between Prussia and Austria, foreshadowed in the assumption by Frederick I. of the Royal crown, declared in the wars of Frederick the Great, and which had influenced the whole course of the struggles against Napoleon, continued unabated. Prussia aspired to enjoy the pre-eminence in Germany which was still held by her great rival. The formation of the Zollverein in 1828 increased her importance. A great commercial union was established; from which

Austria, precluded by the differing character of her provinces, remained shut out. Prussia became admittedly the chief in a great Confederacy, which extended from the borders of France to those of Russia, from the Baltic as far as Switzerland; and already the League which had been formed for trade appeared to be prophetic of the Empire which was hereafter to be created.

The accession of Frederick William IV. in 1840 1840 was made the occasion for the demand of a national parliament in fulfilment of earlier promises. Evaded at the time, the request was soon after met by the convocation of a National Assembly which met for the first time in 1847. It was soon seen, however, that this assembly was powerless, that its functions were but nominal; and the longings for a real effectual representation of the people remained unsatisfied. The share which Frederick William took in the suppression of the republic of Cracow in 1846 was in accordance with the policy of his father. Frederick William III. had helped the Russians to suppress a Polish insurrection in 1830; Frederick William IV. now aided to destroy the last remnant of the Polish kingdom. He provoked, however, still further murmurings from many of his subjects. The year 1848, so fatal to sovereigns, saw at length the protest of words enforced 1848 by action. The population of Berlin rose in imitation of that of Paris and Vienna. The King, who would have avoided, bent before the storm. He accepted the inevitable: he submitted to the dictation of his subjects; and even strove to assert for himself the place of champion of the great liberal movement

A.D. throughout Germany, which he dared no longer to resist.

The scheme was still to overthrow the ascendancy of Austria. The voice of all Germany was clamouring for unity and for reform. The old Confederacy was being temporarily replaced by a National Parliament, composed of deputies from every State, which met at Frankfort, with an authority that was to be supreme. To guide the deliberations of this Parliament, to become the chief of the united Germany which it seemed likely to create, was now the object of the King of Prussia. He had not courage to advance with boldness, as the leader of the liberal hopes; and yet he 1849 almost succeeded in his aim. The Imperial crown was tendered to him in 1849. It was a crown, however, which the necessities of compromise had then shorn of its privileges, and which was surrounded by dangers. The assembly which offered it had become discredited; it had been seen to be unpractical, divided, and dilatory; the hostility of Austria was distinctly declared; and considerations of dignity and of prudence alike prompted the refusal of the title.

Germany, defeated in the realization of its ideal, returned to its old constitution. The fever for change abated; the Confederacy was restored; and Prussia and Austria resumed their respective places. There remained, however, the seeds of a new strife, which had grown up out of the passion for unity, the consequences of which were to rise to an unlooked-for magnitude. In the height of the general enthusiasm, the Duchies of Sleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg, whose population was chiefly of the German race, had been claimed for

Germany. Their inhabitants, offended at what they deemed the insufficient recognition of their rights, had risen against Denmark ; their rebellion, by the direction of the Frankfort Parliament, and by the bidding of self-interest, had been seconded by Prussia ; and though the interference of Russia had enabled the King of Denmark to put down the insurgents, and a congress in London in 1852 had regulated their position under the Danish crown, there were still left the smouldering embers of hostility and jealousy, which were destined before long to burst again into a flame. Frederick William IV. was succeeded by his brother in 1861. The new King was known as a conservative, but not as a man of power. He had a minister, however, whose boldness and whose success has caused the reign to be one of the most glorious in history ; and, if the old custom of the Gothic Kings of Spain, who engraved the names of their great ministers around their crowns, had still survived, the name of Prince Bismarck must assuredly have been found upon the crown of William I.

The aspirations of liberal ideas and of philosophers had failed. Germany was still a divided country ; Prussia had not yet achieved her pre-eminence. A change of policy, unexpected, and unwelcome at the first, accomplished both. To liberalism succeeded despotism ; to the force of moral influence the sword. The King of Prussia ruled, no longer as the champion of his people's hopes, but as the autocrat of his country. The remonstrances of Parliament were disregarded ; the privileges of its members were violated ; its right to control the public expenditure was ignored. William I. and his minister directed measures and imposed

A.D.
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A.D. taxation without caring to have the authority which the Constitution required. The beginning of the reign was therefore stormy; the King and the minister were unpopular. But war came soon to engage men's minds; and the remembrance of illegality became lost in the intoxication of success.

From Denmark came the origin of strife. To Frederick VII., who died in 1863, succeeded, according to the Convention of London, Prince Christian of Glucksburg. Such claims of birth as the new sovereign possessed had been transmitted to him through females; and a party arose within the disaffected Duchies, who claimed that, notwithstanding the Convention, the old Salic law should be observed, and that Holstein, and with it Sleswig, as inseparable by ancient treaties, should pass to the male line. A pretender was not wanting; and the Germanic Diet, which now foresaw the revived opportunity of adding to the extent of the Empire, proclaimed a Federal execution, as a step towards the settlement before itself of the question. Prussia, still coveting advantage for herself, and Austria, jealous of any Prussian gain, accepted, each for her own ends, the execution that 1863 was entrusted to them. War, as the device of the strong, succeeded quickly to negotiation; and Europe, sympathizing and protesting as she had done before, did nothing. Then followed the defeat, after a brave resistance, of the Danes; and the Duchies were surrendered into the occupation of the invaders. The war was short and comparatively trivial. It gains, however, an importance from having been the origin of a later struggle which gave to Prussia the recognized supremacy in Germany.

The two Powers that were in possession now constituted themselves joint sovereigns of their conquest. They next proceeded to divide their administration. Sleswig was ruled by Prussia; Holstein and Lauenburg by Austria. But here their concord ended. Their policy was different, their rule antagonistic. Prussia was governed by a King whose sympathies were never liberal, and who was guided by a minister more autocratic and less scrupulous than himself. The scheme for a united Germany might still exist, but that for an aggrandized Prussia had become paramount. Germany might indeed be one, if she would subordinate herself to Prussia; but Prussia no longer cared to think of the subordination of herself to Germany. Agreeably to this, a policy of annexation, not confederation, was contemplated; of which the Duchies were to be the earliest fruits. Austria, not willing to see the growth of Prussia, preferred the old design, and seemed the champion of the smaller States. In Sleswig, all expression of opinion, all discussion of the claims of rival candidates, were suppressed by the Prussians; in Holstein they were all permitted by the Austrians. The result was complaint and recrimination. The tone of Prussia made war, which no doubt had long been contemplated, imminent. The occasion was seized by Italy, to rise up against Austria for the recovery of Venetia. The counter-preparations of Austria were resented by the Prussians as directed against themselves. Their tone became more threatening. The Germanic Diet, protesting, but powerless, was treated with contempt, and was finally declared to have exceeded its functions, and to be no longer recognized.

A.D. The sovereigns of Saxony, of Hanover, and of Hesse Cassel, who had dared to make common cause with Austria, were summoned on the 15th June to disarm; and on the 16th, when they had returned no answer, the Prussians marched upon them to enforce their will.

1866 The war had now begun. On the side of Prussia were the minor principalities of the north, on that of Austria the larger principalities and the whole of the South German States. The alliance with Italy, however, gave Prussia an advantage; for the Italians, though not formidable in the field, compelled the division of the Austrian forces, and weakened their resistance in the north. The contest was carried on in different quarters. Along the valley of the Po the Italians assumed the offensive; and, though defeated in their attacks, engaged the attention of a large Austrian force. In the west of Germany the Prussians occupied Hesse Cassel, compelled the capitulation of the Hanoverian army, defeated the Bavarians, and penetrated almost as far as Augsburg. The eyes of Europe looked with interest upon operations which contributed so largely to the successes of Prussia; but they were riveted with yet greater attention upon the fields of Bohemia, where still greater armies and a more decisive combat were determining the issues of the war.

Following the example of Frederick the Great the Prussian generals had marched into Saxony. Their occupation of the country had given them a base of operations; and their armies now pressed forward, through the mountain passes of Bohemia, to converge by separate routes upon its plains. The delays of Austria, unwilling to accept of war, and slow, as she

has always been, in her preparations for it, allowed these plans to be accomplished. The Prussian armies united upon the plains. In slight engagements they won successes which seemed to indicate their triumph ; and finally, upon the field of Sadowa, they engaged the whole forces of their enemy, and defeated them with a completeness that at once ensured their unopposed advance upon Vienna.

The success of Prussia, however, had aroused the jealousy of the Emperor of the French, whose claims to share in all the arrangements of Europe were now, in the height of his power, of necessity recognized. Austria accepted eagerly his mediation ; and, surrendering Venetia into his hands, conciliated his good offices, and ensured the safety of her southern frontier. Prussia felt that in her career of victory a new enemy might rise against her. Her armies for a time continued their advance ; they came to within fifty miles of Vienna. But soon diplomacy arrested further progress ; and within seven weeks, as it was said, from the commencement of the war, a truce was made, to be followed speedily by the Peace of Prague.

Prussia gained the object of long years : she now excluded Austria from Germany. Into the new State that might be formed that Power was not to enter ; in the closer ties which Prussia might contract with the Northern principalities she was not to interfere. She had ceded Venetia ; she now gave up her leadership in Germany. From Austria Prussia won the acknowledgment of her supremacy ; from the allies of Austria she won the increase of her territory. Hanover, Hesse Cassel, Hesse Homburg, half of Hesse Darmstadt, Nas-

A.D. — sau, the free city of Frankfort, and the Danish Duchies, subject to the right of the people of North Sleswig, as being Danish in race, to decide hereafter by a free vote as to their fate,* were incorporated with the monarchy. By special stipulation no part of Saxony was annexed ; but the military command within the country was transferred to the King of Prussia, and the civil government alone was left to her own King. A Northern Federation was now formed, which extended from the Baltic to the river Main. The military command over the whole was entrusted to the King of Prussia ; and in the Federal Parliament, which was summoned, the large preponderance of votes belonging to the greater country placed virtually all power within her hands.

War for the time was over ; the consolidation of power followed. In Prussia itself the remembrance of disputes and differences was lost in that of victory, and an indemnity at once was passed for all the schemes and measures which had made triumph possible. In the conquered States the belief that the cause of Germany was prospering, that her greatness and her unity were advancing, made even the loss of independence tolerable ; and Austria, adhering loyally to her engagements, did not disturb the general peace. But the jealousies of France, which had been aroused, had not subsided. The presence of a strong and a united power, instead of a weak and divided one, upon her frontiers, was displeasing to her. Her prestige, moreover, seemed to be passing from her ;

* The stipulation in favour of the Danish Duchies was subsequently annulled by a treaty of 11th October, 1878.

and it was Prussia, and no longer herself, that attracted the attention of Europe. Men prophesied that in no distant time new war would come. Attempts to obtain a compensating increase to his power were made by the Emperor Napoleon. Schemes, it was thought, were entertained against Belgium; the purchase of Luxemburg from the King of Holland was proposed. But the connivance of Count Bismarck, which was claimed in return for the neutrality which had permitted his success, was not given. And with increasing irritation the French murmured against the insolence and the ingratitude of the Prussian nation.

In such a temper the most trivial pretext was made use of as an occasion for war. In 1870 the throne of Spain was vacant, and the offer of it to an obscure member of the House of Hohenzollern was eagerly resented as a new symptom of Prussian aggressiveness. That such was not the case was proved by the abandonment of the proposed candidature as soon as it appeared that the peace of Europe was threatened. The French, however, were not thus to be baulked of their design. The rise of Prussia had threatened, if it had not caused, their own decline; and war alone was able to restore that sole pre-eminence in continental Europe which was the passion of the nation and the condition of existence, as it might seem, for the ruling dynasty. The French ambassador received instructions to press for a distinct assurance from the Prussian King that no such candidature should be revived; and the just rebuke which his importunities excited became the excuse for war. Prussia entered upon the contest with all the sympathies of Europe, for the

A.D. war was forced upon her; and her calm resolve to meet it contrasted favourably with the mad excitement of the French who believed themselves already upon the way to Berlin.

1870 A war ensued which in one year placed Prussia on the pinnacle of military greatness. The struggles of past times, of Frederick even, and of the War of Liberation, now paled before the mightier efforts of a succeeding generation. Armies were numbered, not by tens of thousands, but by hundreds; and the defeats and victories were on a scale that made Europe shudder at the war of giants. The South German States, though so lately enemies to Prussia, now rallied to her cause against a French invasion; and a united Germany stood forward against France. To defend the Fatherland was the first cry of all; but soon, as want of preparation upon the side of the French was revealed, the defending armies became invaders, and all Germany advanced to chastise the aggressiveness of France.

The Palatinate became the gate of war by which three armies entered on French soil. The southernmost of these beat in the line of French defence at Wissemburg, and compelling an army which had covered Strasburg to advance to a defeat at Woerth, left the French fortress open to a siege. The central corps advanced direct on Metz, and marching round it on the south were able, after a succession of desperate engagements, among which the names of Mars la Tour and Gravelotte were prominent, to cut off the retreat of a French army of nearly 200,000 men and pen them within a circle round the besieged city. The northern

army, after victories at Spicheren and Forbach, advancing upon Chalons, where the French forces had been rallied, were met by the intelligence that their enemy had circled to the north with the object of relieving Metz, and turning on their flank were able to surround them at Sedan, where, after the most decisive battle of the war, they compelled the capitulation of 90,000 men and the surrender of the Emperor Napoleon himself as a prisoner of war. The French were everywhere defeated; yet their spirit, rejecting the sacrifices that would have been required for peace, determined to prolong the war. They deposed their defeated Emperor, and formed a government of Republican appearance for the national defence. Thenceforth, however, the advance of the Germans was virtually unopposed. While the sieges of Strasburg and of Metz were pressed, and while detached forces were securing in succession the fortresses of Laon, Toul, Neu Breisach, and others, the bulk of the invaders were hastening to Paris. They found a city prepared, with a heroism that they had not expected, to endure a siege. For five months they lay around the capital of France. New armies, released by the surrender of Strasburg and of Metz, appeared to compass its surrender; and the besieged were powerless to break through the iron circle that surrounded them. On the south, and in the north, along the Loire, and even into Brittany, the Germans pursued and scattered the gathering recruits, whose inexperience and whose fears prevented them, save in the rarest instances, from checking their opponents. Paris, starved to a surrender, fell; and in her fall dragged down the French nation. That nation, which

A.D.

A.D. — had boasted that not a stone of her fortresses, not an inch of her soil, should be torn from her, submitted in the hopelessness of her defeat to the surrender of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, gave Metz, till now the virgin fortress, into the hands of Germany, and bound herself to pay the conquerors an indemnity of £200,000,000, which was enforced in the determination of crippling for long years the French nation.

While the struggle had continued the desire and the need for a united Germany had grown. The wishes of the people had received the sanction of their princes; and negotiations had been undertaken for the alliance of the southern principalities with the north. The result was an extension of the Confederation, which had been confined to the north, to the whole of Germany. A Federal Council and a Federal Parliament were instituted. In the council 17 votes out of 59 belonged to Prussia, in the Parliament 236 out of 397. At the head of the Confederation was placed the King of Prussia. The command of the united armies, with the exception of that of Bavaria during time of peace, was given to him, and he enjoyed the power of declaring war in case of invasion, and of making peace at all times. To the new State and to its Head no titles seemed so applicable as those of Empire and of Emperor. The princes urged their adoption, the North German Parliament seconded them. Accordingly, while the German armies still lay around the walls of Paris, the assumption of them was proclaimed. The halls of Louis XIV. at Versailles beheld the inauguration of the new Empire. At Frankfort, upon the close of the war, the new Emperor

was crowned. King in Prussia, Emperor in Germany, William of Hohenzollern had mounted to the summit of the ladder on which his ancestors successively had climbed. Six hundred years before, it had been the pride of his family to help in raising the first Hapsburg to the Imperial throne. Now their own turn had come. The long rivalry with Austria had ended. She had been excluded from Germany. She was now compelled to behold, and even to congratulate, the once despised King of the Vandals, who had arisen to occupy her place. Wielding a power confessedly the first in Europe, it was now the task of the new Emperor to assure its permanence by strengthening in peace the union which had come from war. There were jealous eyes regarding the new Empire. Russia for her Baltic provinces, Austria for her Arch-duchy, could not behold without anxiety the growth of a power, which seemed to claim that its boundaries were to be co-extensive with its language. France, still vowing her revenge, seemed waiting but for a favourable opportunity for war. And the path of peace appeared to be clouded by rising jealousies, from which many prophesied the coming of still wider and more disastrous strife.

VI.
RUSSIA.

R U S S I A.

“THE name of Russians,” says Gibbon, “was first
divulged in the ninth century;” their envoys had
passed through Constantinople, and had arrived at
the court of Lewis the son of Charlemagne, in the
hopes of a return by the Northern Ocean. The usual
anarchies of a rude society are to be traced in the
dissensions of their nation; and the invitation to
Norman settlers to assist or to rule them, is at least a
proof of the incapacity of those who called them. The
Varangians, as these settlers were named, became first
the benefactors, then the tyrants, of the tribes. Fore-
most among them were three brothers, of whom the
eldest, Rurik, has perpetuated his name in the dynasty A.D. 862-97
which he founded. The ancient Novgorod submitted
herself to his rule, while remoter principalities received
his brothers’ yoke. Less famous leaders, pressing
southward, obtained the mastery of Kief; and descend-
ing the broad Dnieper, appeared before the walls of
Constantinople, to be repulsed by the tempests of the
Bosphorus, but to leave the terror of their name behind
them.

The separate conquests which had thus been made
were soon united under a single head. Rurik inherited

A.D. his brothers' thrones; and the ambition of Oleg, the
912 regent for Igor his successor, made him extend his conquests until they had embraced Kief. To him is due the fame of having laid the first foundations of the Russian Empire. Uniting the South to the North he extended his dominion from the Baltic almost to the river Boug. The conquered districts in time received the name as well as the yoke of their conquerors. The territories of Smolensk, of Kief, and of Lemberg, became known respectively as the White, the Red, and the Black Russia. The Grand Princes of these early times were more truly Sovereigns of All the Russias than any of their successors who have since assumed the name.

The hill of Kief, a solitary eminence in the midst of a vast plain, with the river Dnieper flowing at its base, became at once the capital of the new Empire, "the mother," as Oleg called it, "of Russian cities." Strong in its natural position, with a gentle climate, and commanding the great high road to Constantinople, it had advantages to which the more ancient Novgorod could lay no claim. From its walls the Russians now descended to renewed attacks upon the great city of the Greeks. Once under Oleg, twice under Igor, and again, after a long interval, under Yaroslaf, did they advance. The potent aid of gifts and of Greek fire repulsed their attempts; but the terror which they spread was perhaps not less than that which earlier barbarians had given at the gates of Rome. "In the last days," it was already said, "the Russians shall be masters of Constantinople;" and gold was freely lavished, that hastened their departure, but that also

quicken their return. The Greek historians tell us of these things. Kief had as yet no annalist and hardly a written language. She is indebted for the record of her exploits to the terror she excited in her foes.*

If Oleg has the fame of being the true founder of the Russian Empire, the Grand Duchess Olga, the wife of Igor, was the first to govern it. Under the wisdom of her rule the Russians began to emerge from the condition of a mere plundering horde, and to assume the character of an organized nation. The fame of her wisdom and her greatness has survived in the traditions of the Russian people; and her conversion to Christianity, after she had laid down her rule, has 955 made her known as "the Sainted" in their religious history. The reign of Sviatoslaf, her son, shows even 957-72 the traces of a policy, and no longer the mere thirst for plunder. The descents upon Constantinople are suspended; and the Russian armies advance towards the Danube, in the hope of transferring the seat of their empire to the rich provinces of the Bulgarians. The Grand Duke was even able to penetrate as far as Adrianople. But the fears of the Greek Empire were aroused; and the victories of John Zimisces drove him back to perish among the savage tribes who lay in wait for him upon the Dnieper.

* The belief in Russian conquest had its expression in very early times. The statue of Bellerophon, one of the most ancient monuments in the hippodrome at Constantinople, had inscribed upon it: "*historias rerum novissimarum quæ urbi accident cum a Russis expugnabitur.*" Codinus, *de origine urbis*. Quoted by Hammer, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, VII. 100. Compare the belief held by the Turks that the Christians will re-enter through the Golden Gate, walled up since the triumph of the Emperor Basil over the Bulgarians, and re-establish their religion. Hammer, II. 389.

A.D. The great designs, however, of Sviatoslaf for the
— future of his people were not destined to be fulfilled.
The division of his empire into appanages, which he
had been the first to sanction, induced the weakness
980-1015 of civil war after his death; and Vladimir, who
eventually ruled alone, did not take up his father's
schemes. Great as a conqueror, with Livonia on the
north, and on the west Galicia, even to the Vistula,
submitting to him, he is yet greater among the
chroniclers as having been the Saint who accepted
Christianity as the religion of his people. The glory
of Constantinople, its arts, and its refinements, had
had their effect; the people believed that the faith
of so great a nation must be good for themselves;
the remembrance of the Grand Duchess Olga, who
had been baptized at Constantinople, was before them;
their monarch was dazzled by the prospect of a
marriage with the Princess Anna, the sister of the
Greek Emperor; and the Russian people, like the
Frankish host, followed at once the example and the
command of their leader.

The influence of the Byzantine court is now more
visible. The Russian merchants, or invaders, who had
visited Constantinople, had already seen the splendour
and the refinements of the Eastern Cæsars; and,
though the contrast to their own rude customs may at
first have checked their sympathies with the Greeks,
yet they had quickly learned to admire and to imitate
what was so far in advance of their own civilization.
To the same people from whom they had sought their
refinements they now owed their faith; and the result
was a superstitious reverence, and a wish for assimila-

tion, which became the origin of the national desire for the actual possession of the Empire of the Greeks. Kief was now made a second Constantinople. Its metropolite was a Greek, its cathedral bore the name of St. Sophia, and the entrance to the city was the Golden Gate. Greek teachers, and the adaptation of the Greek alphabet which is still used, were encouraged in the schools; Greek luxuries of dress and living were adopted; and Greek architects and painters have left their works to attest the introduction of Byzantine science to the North.

A comparison of Russia with the west of Europe during the first half of the eleventh century, shows her to have been among the foremost kingdoms of the time. The court of Yaroslaf the Great, who ruled from 1019 to 1054, was inferior in no degree to that of Edward the Confessor in England, or Henry I. of France. The Grand Duke of Russia ruled over an empire more vast than that of any other sovereign in Europe; his people were adopting the arts and graces of life; and from all sides the sovereigns of Christendom were eagerly securing his alliance.* But the fair promise of development was rudely checked; and causes for which Russia herself is responsible, threw back the Empire for five hundred years, and made her last instead of first in working out the civilization of Europe.

The Grand Duke Sviatoslaf had been the first to weaken his growing country by the institution of

* The daughters of Yaroslaf became Queens of Norway, France, and Hungary. The sons are said to have married into the royal houses of England, Poland, and Constantinople. See Karamsin, *Histoire de Russie*, II. 36.

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appanages; and the civil wars which had ensued upon his death were repeated when Vladimir followed his example. Yaroslaf the Great had been able to reunite the Empire, and had ruled from Asia to the Vistula, from the Boug to the desert regions of the Arctic Sea; but even he had not learnt how fatal such divisions were; and the distribution of his Empire among his sons was a commencement of the long anarchy which paved the way for the success of foreign enemies and for the obliteration of the Russian people from the rank of independent nations. For a space of near two hundred years, the history of the country is a long succession of civil wars, in which crime and violence abound. The younger brothers conspire against the elder, the uncles against the nephews, until principalities become multiplied, and Kief, which at first had been regarded as the prize of supremacy, is fallen to be but the capital of a small province, while the title of Grand Prince becomes an illusion. With the rise of independent principalities new cities to defend them were founded; and Vladimir and Moscow date their origin from the commencement of the 12th century. The former owed its name to the grandson of Yaroslaf the Great and of the Greek Emperor Constantine Monomachus. His descent proved useful to his fame. Pre-eminent in Russia while he lived, he is still remembered as the founder of her second capital, and as the first who is said to have worn a crown that had graced the brows of the Cæsars. The vanity of his people might aspire with a child-like desire to the possession of such an emblem of dignity; and the crown of Monomachus became to them a sacred

treasure, the mark, as they might love to fancy it, of equality with the Greek Empire, the mystic pledge that they should be its heirs. The successor of Vladimir enlarged the city which he built; and, while Kief was sinking under the more violent dissensions of the South, the younger city gathered up her strength, until her Prince in 1169 besieged and pillaged without remorse the old metropolis of his race, so that even the last rays of her ancient glory departed from her. Thenceforth Vladimir was the capital, and her possessors were the Grand 1169 Princes, of Russia.

The period of greatness had been followed by decline, that of decline was now to be succeeded by extinction. The authority which the Grand Princes still retained was but a shadow of the past, and even this shadow was now to be taken from them. Already a prey to anarchy, the country seemed to invite the attack of enemies. The hordes of Asia overflowed into Europe; the Lithuanians seized the moment to extend their frontiers; and the first period of Russian history is closed by the prostration of the country beneath floods which, pouring in from East and West, swept down its ancient landmarks and obliterated even its name.

The early years of the 13th century had seen the 1206-27 conquests of Zinghis Khan in Asia. His successors had aspired to extend their empire over Europe. In 1224 a flying incursion had left the south of Russia devastated and trembling; and in 1237 a returning host, under Bati Khan, compelled the final submission of 1237 the weak and divided Russian princes. The cities were burnt and plundered; the inhabitants were

A.D. massacred. Kozelsk, an unknown town, is celebrated as having endured a siege of seven weeks; but its courage could not avail to save it, and the inhabitants were slaughtered to a man. Vladimir itself did not escape the common fate; the Grand Prince of Russia was made the vassal of a Tartar Khan. Alone among the cities the ancient Novgorod has boasted its exemption from plunder. The great city, though fallen since the days of Rurik from being the capital of an Empire, had risen to the dignity of a Republic. It had found wealth in trade; and at successive epochs had introduced the riches of Constantinople to the North, the merchandise of the great Hanse Towns to the South. It had profited by the example, and had emulated the prosperity, of the rich cities of Germany. It had striven also to attain their freedom; and, though still continuing to acknowledge a vague allegiance to the Russian Princes, it had been able, by its wealth and its remoteness from control, to win or to assume privileges, until it had resembled Bremen or Lubeck in the sovereignty of its assemblies, and had surpassed those cities by the assumption of a style declaratory of its independence. It boasted further of a prince, St. Alexander Nevsky, to whom a glorious victory over the Swedes had already given a name, and whose virtues were hereafter to enrol him among the Saints; and it had a defence in the marshes and forests which surrounded it and which had already once deterred the invaders. But even the great city could not continue to defy the Tartar horde, and its submission is at once the last and the most conclusive proof of the supremacy of their power.

Thenceforth the nation felt the bitterness of servitude. The Tartars did not occupy the country they had conquered; they retired to establish their settlements upon the Volga, where they became known as the Golden Horde: but they exacted the tribute and the homage of the Russian Princes, and the terror of their name was such as to cause these readily to be paid. At first it seemed as though the yoke of conquest might be lightened. The Khan had recognized the merits of the Prince of Novgorod. He was declared Grand Prince and sovereign of Vladimir; and his life seems to have been passed in the attempt at reconciling his people and their oppressors. But he left no worthy successor. The princes who ruled after him degraded both themselves and their nation; and bringing their petty jealousies and strifes for power before the throne of the Khans completed their own abasement. Five centuries have been unable to obliterate the traces which this period has imprinted upon the national character. The Tartars oppressed and extorted tribute from the Russian princes; the princes in their turn became the oppressors and extortioners of their people. Deceit and lying, the refuge of the weak, became habitual. Increasing crime and increasing punishments combined to brutalise the people. The vice of drunkenness was universal. Trade indeed was not extinguished; and religion prospered so abundantly that of all the many monasteries of Russia there are but few that do not owe their origin to this time; but the one was encouraged by the avarice, the other by the superstition, of the Tartars, and there was little of ennobling influence about them.

A.D. ——— Meanwhile the provinces of the West were falling into the hands of other enemies. The Tartar wave had swept as far as Poland, but it had then recoiled, and had left the countries westward of the Dnieper to their fate. All links of the connection that had bound these regions to the Princes of Vladimir, were now broken. Vitepsk, Polotsk, Smolensk, and even provinces still nearer Moscow, were gradually absorbed by the growing power of Lithuania, which, starting from narrow limits between the Dwina and the Niemen, was destined to overshadow Russia. The provinces of the South for a time maintained a certain unity and independence under the name of the Duchy of Halicz or Kief; but these also, through claims of inheritance or feudal right, became eventually merged in the dominions of their neighbours. Poland obtained Black Russia, which has never since returned to its earlier masters. Lithuania acquired Volhynia and Red Russia, and thus extended her wide empire from the Baltic as far as the Red Sea. Then came the union of these powers by the acceptance in 1383 of the Grand Duke Jagellon as King of Poland; and all hopes for the Russian princes of recovering their possessions seemed lost.

The ancient empire of Yaroslaf was thus ended; and its history is parted from that of mediæval Russia by the dark curtain of two centuries in which the Russian people were a race but not a nation. The obscure descendants of Rurik still occupied his throne, and ruled with some appearance of hereditary succession. They even chose this period of their weakness to solace their vanity by the adoption of the style of Sovereigns

of All the Russias. But they were the mere vassals of the Golden Horde; and their so-called sovereignty, so far from embracing the old provinces which their new title claimed, was confined by the encroachments of their enemies and by rival princes of their own race to an unimportant territory around Vladimir and Moscow.

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It was not until the reign of Dimitry IV., that any 1362-89 sign was shown of reviving independence. Time, by weakening the Tartars, had then brought freedom nearer to the Russians. The Horde, which had been united under Bati, when it had first precipitated itself upon Europe, had become divided by the ambition of rebellious Khans, who had aspired to establish their independent power; and the Russians had at length a prince who was able to profit by the weakness of his enemies. Dimitry, who reigned from 1362 to 1389, is celebrated as having checked the divisions which civil strife and appanages had inflicted upon his country, and as having also gloriously repulsed the Lithuanians from the walls of Moscow, now rising to be his capital. But his greatest deed, and that by which he lives in the remembrance of every Russian, is his victory upon 1383 the Don, which gave to him thenceforth the name of Donskoi. The Tartars, indignant at his prominence, had united with the Lithuanians. For the first time the Russians turned against their tyrants, and found upon the field of Khoulikof that their freedom was still possible. They did not achieve indeed for many years what they now began to hope. Their strength was crippled by renewed attacks of Tartars from the south and of Lithuanians from the west; and they

A.D. could not dare to brave the revengeful enmity of
 ——— the Horde. For a hundred years they still paid
 tribute, and the successors of Dimitry still renewed
 their homage at the camp upon the Volga. But pro-
 1389-1425 gress gradually was made. The Grand Prince Vassili
 Dimitrievitch was able to extend his rule over a
 territory that occupied the space of six or seven of
 the modern governments round Moscow; and though
 1425-62 the country, under Vassili Vassilievitch, became en-
 feebled by a renewal of civil strife, the increasing
 weakness of the Tartar power continued to prepare
 the way for the final independence that was accom-
 plished by the close of the fifteenth century.

The reign of Ivan III. became the opening of a new
 epoch in Russian history. He restored his people, long
 sunk out of the gaze of Europe, to a place among its
 nations, and recalled them in some degree from the
 barbarism of the East to the intercourse and civiliza-
 tion of the West. The Russia of old time was now no
 more; but the Grand Prince, or Duke of Moscow, as
 he was called, was still the heir of Rurik and of
 Yaroslaf, and in the growth of his Duchy their Empire
 reappeared. Ivan was in the midst of principalities
 and powers that had risen during the night of anarchy
 and out of the crumbling ruins of the Tartar power.
 Russian Princes, Tartar Khans, ambitious republics,
 aspiring to or having obtained their independence,
 surrounded him; while behind them there still sur-
 vived the remnant of the great Tartar and Lithuanian
 Empires, with claims that had not diminished with
 their power. Without the fame of a warrior, but
 with the wisdom of a statesman, with a strong hand

and by the help of a long reign, he built up out of the fragments that surrounded him an Empire that exceeded vastly that of his immediate predecessor. It seemed as though the spirit of the age and of its monarchs had descended upon Russia. Upon the thrones of Europe were Ferdinand of Aragon and Louis XI., Henry VII. and Frederick III.; and the character of Ivan and of his reign has ranked him not unequally with his great contemporaries.

The fall of the republic of Novgorod and the final 1478 extinction of the Golden Horde, are the events which are most prominent. Riches had been the bane of the great city. They had fostered insolence, but they had given a distaste for war. The citizens had often rebelled; they had accepted the protection of Lithuania, and had later meditated, and even for a time accomplished, a union with Poland. But they had had no strength to defend the liberty to which they had aspired. Men whose brave ancestors had conquered Swedes, and Lithuanians, and Teutonic Knights, were now content to trust their freedom to their gold instead of to their swords; and when Ivan advanced, determined, as he said, to reign at Novgorod as he reigned at Moscow, they were unable to repel or to endure a siege, and they surrendered themselves into his hand. Once he had pardoned them; now their independence was taken from them. Their assembly was dissolved; their great bell, the emblem of their freedom, was carried to Moscow.*

* So at Ghent, under Charles V., "the great bell Roland was condemned and sentenced to immediate removal." Motley's "Dutch Republic."

A.D. The extinction of the Golden Horde was due to
— 1480 time and policy, rather than to any deeds which have brought glory to the Russian people. Ivan had studied to escape from war ; and the occasional tribute which he had paid, and the dissensions of the Tartars among themselves, had preserved him from its dangers. The power of the Horde was breaking. The conquests of Tamerlane, which had extended from Asia into the frontiers of Europe, had hastened its decline. But in 1480 the Khan had allied with the Lithuanians, who were as eager as himself to crush the new Empire that was rising up against them ; and, relying upon their support, he advanced to the very walls of Moscow. His expectations, however, were disappointed. Poland was being invaded, at the instigation of Ivan, by the Khan of the Crimea ; and the attention of the Lithuanians being thus engaged they were unable to give their co-operation. By themselves the Horde were powerless. They did not dare to force on the contest, which Ivan, although to the prejudice of his own fame, persistently declined. Their fears exceeded those of their enemy. Afraid for themselves, afraid for their homes that were left exposed to an enemy in rear, they fled ; and meeting with a hostile Khan were scattered and pursued in a rout as far as the Volga ; their settlements were destroyed, and their name even was extinguished.

Released in this manner from the most dangerous both of domestic and of foreign foes the power of Ivan rapidly advanced. The broad province of Perm, that had begun to boast a half accomplished independence, had been early forced to acknowledge her subjection.

The Khan of Kazan was now made tributary; and the rule of Ivan was extended from the Oural to the Neva. Provinces, as important, though less extensive, were acquired in the south. The Russian princes and cities that had preserved their independence were all, with the one exception of Riazan, compelled to acknowledge the sovereignty of Moscow; and Ivan thus became the lord of Tver, of Yaroslaf, of Rostof, and of Vareia. At the same time the Lithuanians were thrust back. Their greatness had gone by; and the territories of Tula, Kalouga, and Orel, now ceasing to own allegiance to a declining power, were incorporated with the rising Empire. That Empire had already reached the Dnieper, and was already scheming to recover the ncienta capital of its princes.

In the eyes of Ivan himself his power and his dignity were inferior to none in Europe. The Emperor Frederick III., had offered him the rank of King, but he had replied that he held his crown from God alone, and would not degrade himself by accepting titles from any Prince on earth. He even aspired to be the successor of the Eastern Cæsars. Their Empire had now fallen; the city to which in their pride and humiliation alike the Russians had still turned, as to the centre of the world, was in the hands of the Turks; and ambition had prompted Ivan to lay claim to the inheritance of an illustrious name and attempt to transfer its ancient glories to his rising people. Again, as in the days of old, the Russian sovereign had aspired to an Imperial bride; and his marriage with Sophia, the niece of the last Emperor of the East, had been followed by the adoption of the

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double eagle of Constantine, and by the use of the name of Czar in his dealings with the monarchs of the West.* These princes did not exaggerate, but they acknowledged and began to court his power. Frederick III. had offered rank; Maximilian professed to have desired his daughter's hand; and an alliance against Poland was entered into between Austria and Muscovy, of which the possession of Hungary and of Kief were intended to be the double fruit. At the same time the Popes, the spiritual chiefs of Christendom, had perceived the importance of reconciling the new Empire to the Latin faith; and Sixtus IV. had striven to conciliate Ivan by aiding his designs of marriage. Denmark had sent her embassies to solicit the goodwill of Moscow; the Muscovite ambassadors had been received with respect even by the haughty Venetians.

The progress of civilization, however, had not kept pace with that of power. Four centuries of decline had stamped their mark upon the Russian people; and the faint rays of light, which had been brought through the continuance of trade with Germany and with Constantinople, had not been sufficient to prevent the nation from becoming barbarous under its Tartar masters. It now found itself with a recovered independence, but without recovered opportunities of culture. The centre of its hopes, the object of its emulation, was no more. Constantinople, under the dominion of the Turks, could no longer educate by her example or her intercourse. All central Europe

* The word Czar or Tsar is a Russ translation of Khan. It is found in Slavonian bibles, where Saul and David are called Tsars. The Russians gave the same title to the Emperors of Constantinople.

lay behind the hostile barrier of Poland. And thus it happened that Russia, still excluded from civilization, retained for many years its savage character, while its sovereigns continued to resemble Asiatic despots rather than European princes. A.D. —

Ivan III. had a son and a grandson who continued his work. Vassili renewed the alliance with the 1505-33 Maximilian; and pressing forward against the Lithuanians was rewarded by the capture of Smolensk. The town of Pskof, the daughter and disciple in rebellion of Novgorod, was compelled to relinquish 1510 her independence; and Riazan, the last of the free 1517 Russian principalities, was incorporated by him. These were achievements worthy of the reigns that came before and after him; and had it not been that the fame of Vassili has been perhaps unduly obscured by the greatness of his successor, his reign might have commanded more attention from Russian historians.

Ivan IV., to be known in history as Ivan the Terrible, 1533-81 succeeded as a child of four years old under the regency of his mother. A youth more wild than that of Henry V., was redeemed by a manhood as glorious as that of the English king; and if his later years were disgraced with barbarities, it is only charitable to remember that there have been apologists who have found excuses for him in a disordered intellect. The early years of his reign were weakened by his own excesses, by the strife of factions, and by the incursions of foreign enemies. But the child grew up; and at seventeen, declaring himself both able and determined to rule alone, the crown of Monomachus was placed on his brows, the title of Czar in all home

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as well as foreign transactions was adopted, and the opening of a reign of ambition and power was thus proclaimed to the world.

His empire rapidly progressed. At the age of twenty he had already given to his subjects a code of laws, the first they had received since the days of Yaroslaf. He aimed at making his country great in peace as well as in war. He sent ambassadors to the court of Charles V., to gather information and to profit by the example of the greatest monarch of the time; and he invited German settlers to bring their arts and industries to Muscovy. The introduction of printing followed; architecture, not merely that of fortresses, was encouraged; and the example was shown of a toleration for all religions at a time when the western kingdoms of Europe had hardly yet acquiesced in such a necessity. Trade also was now developed. In 1553, the shipwreck of Richard Chancellor, an English sailor, in search of the north-west passage, became the commencement of intercourse with England. English warehouses arose in the commercial towns; and Archangel owes its origin to this time. The opening of the Baltic next became an object of desire; and the designs and the successes of Peter the Great seemed likely to be anticipated. The course of conquest at the same time was continued. Kazan had threatened to assert its independence. Made tributary by Ivan III., checked in its dangerous growth by Vassili, who had forbidden his subjects to attend its fair, and had thus diverted a great portion of its trade to Moscow, it had still presented to Ivan IV. a formidable source of disquiet and anxiety. Its siege was

undertaken, and is yet remembered in cottage and in palace with a pride that is only equalled by that attaching to the memory of Khoulikof. For the first time the Russians called in science to their aid. They fought no longer with the mere onslaught of barbarians. They used their gabions, and sprang their mines. And the remembrance of this alone, without recalling the greatness of the preparations, the obstinacy of the Kazanese, and the importance of the prize, is sufficient to entitle the event to prominence in Russian history. The one power which had remained to harass Ivan on the east was thus subdued. Two years elapsed, and he added Astrakhan, an easy conquest, to his dominions; and then, transferring his attention to the west, he proceeded to hasten and to profit by the decline of Livonia. 1554

The cloud, however, which was to darken the latter portion of his reign, was now about to descend upon him. In 1560 his wife died; and her death appears to have been the signal for the outbreak of passions, more terrible than those of the worst Emperors of Rome. Wise counsellors were set aside, and their places were filled by the companions of debauchery and crime. A reign of terror was begun. Tortures and death now threatened every man, at the caprice of a sovereign who seemed to unite the acts both of a tyrant and a madman. A body guard, which had the name of Opritchniks, and which for six years became the willing instrument of Ivan's tyranny, spread terror through the land. Whole cities, as well as individuals, soon learnt to dread the fearful fury of their lord. The inhabitants of some were hurried into exile, those

A.D.
—

A.D. of others were massacred. The province of Tver was
— desolated. In Moscow itself no less than 60,000
persons are said to have perished. The rage of the
Czar burst forth even among his own family; and
the son of Ivan expired, struck down by his own
father's hand. Only the long subjection to a Tartar
yoke can account for the endurance by the Russian
nation of such oppression. They had learnt in their
long servitude to tremble and to obey.

Days of remorse and penitential exercises alternated
with those of crime. Fearful of man's just retribution
as well as of God's, Ivan attempted to prepare for him-
self an asylum, by writing to Elizabeth of England for
a refuge, if necessary, in her dominions. He had not
lost the power to see and to judge of his own position,
though in the midst of acts which hardly argued
sanity. His political schemes were still continued,
though his hand was weakened and his subjects were
disaffected. He saw the Livonian Knights accepting
the fate of their Teutonic brethren, and despairingly
submitting to the extinction of their Order and the
partition of their provinces. The conquests which he
had already made to the westward of Lake Peipus
now seemed to be assured. Already he appeared to
grasp the harbours of the Baltic Coast; and soon the
death of Sigismund of Poland inspired the hope of
adding a new kingdom to his dominions, and of
eclipsing even the greatest of his predecessors in
splendour and extent of Empire. But the fear of
such a master, and the extravagance of his demands,
caused Poland to make choice of Stephen Bathory as
1579 her King; and Ivan eventually became involved in a

disastrous war, which showed conclusively the decline of his power. Attacked by the Swedes and also by the Poles, he was defeated by both. Pskof has the glory, by its brave resistance, of having checked the progress of his enemies; but Ivan was compelled to renounce the conquests he had made, and with them the hope of extending his commerce through the Baltic Sea. One famous acquisition, however, redeems the latter portion of his reign. Siberia became Russian. Known even in the eleventh century to the enterprising traders of Novgorod, and later to such Russians as had visited the camp of the Moguls, it had still remained an unfamiliar and an unexplored country. The expansion of trade now led to its subjection. Yermak, a convict, the memory of whose successes has obliterated that of his crimes, led a band of Cossacks to conquer it on behalf of some rich merchants his 1581 employers. It was the invasion of Mexico or of Peru repeated; and Russia, like Spain, now added a new quarter of the globe to her dominions.

A reign of fifty years was closed in 1584. Of those years one half are marked with glory, the other half are stained with crime. Yet the greatness of Ivan may fairly be considered to outweigh his vices. It is his greatness that has left enduring marks, while of his vices there now remains but the remembrance. He was Terrible, not merely in the sense of our own time, but in the sense of those old Russians who had first applied the name to his grandfather in their awe of his power. In time the might of mediæval Russia had risen to its height. What Yaroslaf had been in ancient times, what Catherine II. was to be in modern

A.D. ones, that Ivan the Terrible had been in the middle
 ————— ages of his country. There now ensued a century of
 decline; and there is no sovereign who can compare
 with him until the days of Peter the Great.

1584-98 Feodor, the son of Ivan, whose mild virtues recall
 the reign of Edward VI. succeeding to the sterner
 rule of Henry VIII. of England, was the last sovereign
 of the House of Rurik. He died after an uneventful
 reign of thirteen years; and the failure of heirs
 entailed upon his country a succession of calamities.
 The Troublous Period of Russian history was now
 about to begin. During his reign the influence of
 Boris Godunof, an able and aspiring brother-in-law,
 had been predominant; and that brother-in-law was
 1598 now able, after a feigned reluctance, to cause himself
 to be proclaimed Czar. His merits were sufficient;
 and his election by the representatives of every class
 gave him an undoubted title to the throne. But it was
 not his birthright; and, though his own possession of
 it remained undisturbed, his son was unable to retain
 1605 it. A pretender arose, who represented Dimitry, a
 murdered son of Ivan. His cause was supported by
 the Poles, too ready to seize the pretext for invading
 Russia. The son of Boris, another Feodor, beheld his
 army and his capital preparing to welcome the preten-
 der, who entered Moscow to put Feodor to death, to
 1606 reign for a single year, and to perish himself at the
 hands of the people whom he had deceived. An
 ambitious noble, Vassily Shouisky, next usurped the
 crown, without caring to assure his title by the
 1610 formalities which Boris had required. Within four
 years he was deposed, and his days were ended in a

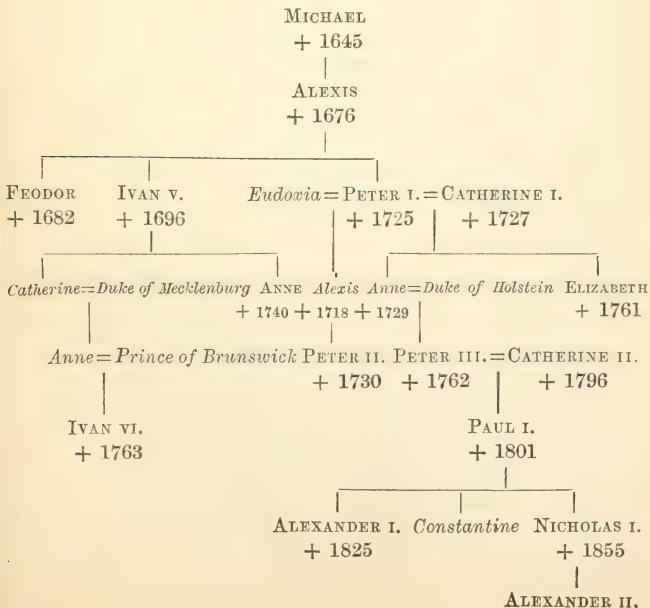
Polish prison. During these years the condition of Russia had become desperate. Pretenders to the throne had continued to arise ; and men, not knowing in whom to believe, had become divided in their allegiance and against each other. The Poles had ravaged the whole country as far as Moscow. They now secured from the humiliation of the nobles the nomination of Ladislaus the son of Sigismund as Czar, 1610 and seized upon the capital in the name of a foreign master. For three years there was no acknowledged sovereign in Russia. The Poles aroused the indignation of the people by the exorbitance of their demands; and overtures in turn were now made by the Russian 1611 nobles for a Swedish prince who should defend and rule the country. But the ambition of the Kings of Poland and of Sweden defeated their designs. Sigismund and Gustavus Adolphus were aspiring themselves to reign in Russia, and were unwilling to establish even their own relatives upon a throne which might prove hostile to them. The Russians, with their overtures on every side disdained, turned back to make the most of their own strength. The provinces of the east united to send forth an army for the reconquest of Moscow ; and a siege, which drove forth the Poles, and made the name of their conqueror 1612 Pojarsky illustrious, became the first proof of a returning strength.

The King of Poland had lost both conquests and a crown. He had refused the offer of the Russians to accept his son ; and he had led their ambassador, the metropolite of Rostof, a prisoner in his triumphant entry into Warsaw. He now saw the son of this very 1613

A.D. prisoner, and not his own, ascending the Russian throne. In an assembly at Moscow, composed of nobles, of merchants, of burgesses, and property-holders, the election of the young Michael Romanof was made. The people had seen the necessity of a sovereign who should heal the wounds of their stricken country. They had recognized the honourable descent of the House of Romanof; they had remembered the virtues, and they had believed in the example of their captive metropolite; and they had been confirmed in their choice of his son by the thought that his family, however eminent, was not yet so powerful as to be dangerous. The election of Michael was in fact a parallel to that of the great founder of the Hapsburg fortunes; and its results still further justify the comparison. Russia, tranquillized, began to revive. She could not reconquer at once the place and power which she had held under Ivan; she had been thrown back for at least a hundred years. But she checked
1617 the progress of decline. Ingria and Carelia were
1619 necessary sacrifices to Sweden; Smolensk and Sievierz to Poland. But these sacrifices, however bitter, secured peace; and the Russians, instead of murmuring under a foreign king, were left to recover under a sovereign of their own race. They were aided by the course of events in Europe. No longer assailed by Swedes and Poles alike, they saw these enemies now turning their arms against each other, and fighting between themselves for the possession of Livonia, a conquest more important to the schemes of Gustavus Adolphus than that of Moscow. Then came the period of the Thirty Years War; and Poland, still breathing ven-

geance against her more recent enemy, was sending forth recruits to aid the Imperial cause against the Swedes, and ships to harass the waters of the Baltic Sea. The Russians had found their opportunity, and they profited by it. They multiplied their forces; they formed their armies. They even dared to renew hostilities in 1632, and for two years besieged Smolensk. But they could not as yet reconquer the lost city, and they had again to acquiesce in peace. The reign of Michael, through his own prudence and 1634 the wise counsels of his father, was one of general recovery; and the Poles, who at its commencement had haughtily exacted the utmost deference from the

HOUSE OF ROMANOF.



A.D. Russians, were amazed to find that at its close the Czar
 1645 Alexis was claiming with all the arrogance of Ivan the
 Terrible the succession to their own vacant throne.

The strength of Russia continued to increase as that
 of Poland continued to decline. Alexis did not
 secure the crown which he had demanded, but he
 obtained possession of many of its provinces. The
 Cossacks, a mongrel race, inhabiting the oft debated
 country about the Dnieper, and until now the subjects
 of the Poles, rebelled against the oppression and
 intolerance of their masters; and giving themselves
 into the protecting hand of Alexis became the means
 of extending his empire. Their allegiance gave him
 1654 power again to attack and this time to reconquer
 Smolensk. Lithuania was overrun. And after years,
 during which the strength of Poland was exhausted
 by wars with Brandenburg and Sweden, as well as
 with Russians and Cossacks, the Czar was able to
 1667 conclude a peace which gave him not only Kief and
 all the Ukraine eastward of the Dnieper, but also the
 provinces of Czernigof, Sievierz, and Smolensk.

Of the sons of Alexis one at least was to prove
 worthy of him. Feodor and Ivan were children by a
 first marriage; Peter the Great was by a second. Six
 years, however, were all that passed before the youngest
 1676-82 brother was proclaimed. Yet the reign of Feodor,
 devoid of foreign triumphs, is still memorable for an
 act by which he has deserved the gratitude of
 posterity. Till his time the public service had been
 suffering under a system which had no parallel in
 Europe. A noble might claim the highest honours
 which any ancestor had held, and could insist that

none whose ancestors had not held higher should be preferred before him. Long rolls of genealogy were jealously preserved to attest these claims; and merit was thus often sacrificed at the instance of a foolish pride, while the State was weakened. Feodor assembled his nobles, and exposed to them the dangers which the State incurred; he was supported by the patriarch; and on the spot, while the opposition which might be felt was still dissembled, he committed the genealogies to the flames. He did not live to carry out the reforms which such an act might indicate, but he had done something to prepare the way for the brother who succeeded to him.

Ivan was weak of intellect, and Peter was a child of ten years old. After tumults, in which the ferocious conduct of the Strelitz was too painfully marked, the 1682 brothers were proclaimed conjointly. An elder sister, Sophia, assumed the government until the capacities of either sovereign should allow him to rule; and for six years she exercised an authority which proved useful to her country, and which might have been still further prolonged had not her ambition excited the indignation and the fears of the younger and more vigorous of her brothers. Stories are even told of the intended assassination of Peter. Such designs, however, if they existed, were defeated by his action: the Regent was dismissed into a convent; and Peter 1689 virtually reigned alone.

In the year when William of Orange ascended the English throne, and while Louis XIV. was at the height of his power, Peter the Great became the master of a kingdom which could no longer, as in the

A.D. — days of Yaroslaf, compare with theirs. Russia was still a wilderness; its people were still barbarians. Vast plains, uncultivated, and untraversed by any roads, divided the scattered cities from each other, and, preventing intercourse, retarded civilization. The capital, already numbering half a million inhabitants, had a magnificence and a prosperity of its own; but it was still remote and inaccessible to foreign nations, and had not attained to the luxuries and refinements of Europe. Its sovereign and its people bore the traces of the East rather than of the West. There was a splendour in which the mingled influence of Constantinople and of Asia was discernible; but behind this outward show was the discomfort and the neglect of the rudest society; and the couch of the proudest noble was usually the hard boards. The people were sunk in ignorance and degradation. Long traditions and the experience of oppression had deprived them of all energy and independence of character. They were indolent, deceitful, and drunken. Their highest virtue was the docility of slaves. The clergy were the class that had most prospered. Royal personages, after the fashion of the Greek Empire, had adopted the garb and had sought the retirement of their monasteries; their patriarchs were even aspiring to an equality with the Czars. They owed their power, however, to the superstition and the ignorance around them, rather than to any example of refinement or of learning that they had shown.

Peter the Great commenced a new era in the development of the power and of the character of his people. He saw their weakness, but he saw their

power to become great; and he bent his unbounded energies to the task of their education. New measures were speedily adopted; new men were found to press them forward. Under the guidance and counsel of a Genevese, by name Lefort, a navy and an army after the European model began to arise; a Scotchman, Patrick Gordon, aided in the task; a cook boy, founder of the great house of Menschikof, was called from the streets to be the favourite and then the faithful minister of the Czar. With all the boldness and with all the intolerance of a reformer, Peter attempted to lay his hand on everything. The whole course of his reign was a long succession of innovations, which were felt in every rank, and which have amply illustrated his energy if not his prudence. The presumption of the clergy was checked; the office of Patriarch was abolished; and while the titular headship of the Church was transferred to the Czar, a most Holy Synod of fourteen members was appointed to deal with ecclesiastical matters. No man whose age was under thirty was now allowed as formerly to choose the idleness of the cloister, and no woman under fifty could bind herself irrevocably as a nun. The nobles, in whose hands had been the collection of taxes, and who had paid no more than they thought fit, were supplanted by other and more amenable agents. The judges, who had often been eminent only for their birth, were now compelled to be eminent in learning also. In the conduct of business improvements were made; the practice of writing upon sheets instead of rolls was introduced; and the ordinary methods of arithmetic took the place of the primitive strings and

A.D. — balls. Even the habits and observances of private life became altered, for Peter strove to assimilate his countrymen to the more polished inhabitants of the west of Europe. The flowing robes of the men were ordered to be cut short; their beards, an almost sacred growth, were to be shaved. The women, who until now had been secluded with Eastern jealousy, were encouraged to appear in public and to mingle in society after the fashion of the West.

Conquest was not the earliest nor was it the absorbing object of the reign. The enlargement of the empire was to be secondary and ancillary to the growth of its resources. Peter aimed at the glory of a statesman rather than of a conqueror. And so it came to pass, that, though the Euxine and the Baltic were made to tremble, the central provinces of Europe, disturbed and defenceless as they were, remained free throughout his reign from any dread of his ambition.

The nation that first felt his power were the Turks. Poland, already at war with the Sultan, invited a Russian alliance. She now offered to relinquish every claim upon the Ukraine and Smolensk in return for aid; and Peter entered readily into a cause which promised to secure and to extend his possessions in the South. The war, though at first unfruitful and interrupted by home affairs, was destined to bring its advantages. Azof, successively the port of the Golden Horde, of the Khans of the Crimea, of the Genoese, and of the Turks, was attacked. Repulsed in 1695, the Russians renewed their attempt in the following 1696 year, and by its success secured a key to the trade and navigation of the Black Sea. In the conferences at

Carlowitz, which followed in 1699, the voice of Russia A.D.
was heard for the first time asserting before the 1699
plenipotentiaries of Europe her claims against Turkey ;
and the peace which followed, though not adding
Kertch, as she had hoped, to her possessions, confirmed
her in the right to her new and most important conquest.

During the time that Russian armies had been prolonging the struggle against the Turks, Peter himself 1698
had been studying for his people in the West. While
emissaries had been sent to Italy and Germany to
acquaint themselves with the sciences of war and
navigation, he himself, in the train of a special embassy to the United Provinces, had visited with eager eyes the shores of the Baltic, had passed through Prussia, and had learned in the dockyards of Saardam the work of a ship-carpenter. He had visited England ; and on his departure had been accompanied by sailors and men of science, to the number of almost five hundred, who were to help him to make his country great. But the people for whom he toiled were still unripe for all he offered them. The influence of priests, who believed that their religion was in danger, the distrust of foreigners, the dislike of change, and behind all perhaps the intrigues of the captive Princess Sophia, had worked upon the people, and there reached him news of a revolution of the Strelitz threatening his throne. Defeated, however, before he reached his capital, the revolters merely awaited their sentence at his hands. He had now in his power to crush a body whose strength had proved as formidable as that of the Prætorians of Rome or the Janissaries of Constan-

A.D. — tinople. Numbers were put to death, the Czar himself assisting in the execution; others were banished to distant quarters of the empire; the well-affected were drafted into the new regiments that were being formed; and if the chastisement were deemed severe, it was excused by the necessity of thus extinguishing for ever what had proved to be a constant source of danger.

Peter again had liberty to turn his eyes abroad, and now they rested on the North. To create a navy, to raise his country to be a naval power, had become the object of his life. With this end he had won an entrance to the Euxine, and he had now to win one to the Baltic. The youth and inexperience of Charles XII. seemed to encourage an attack. Denmark and Poland, who hoped to avenge upon the youthful King the triumphs of his ancestors, were ready to join in an alliance; the pretext of an insult to the Czar upon his travels was put forward; and in this way Peter began the most memorable of his wars.

The fiery energy of Charles at once accepted the struggle. He subdued and baffled Danes and Poles, and entered Ingria to find the Russians besieging the
1700 small town of Narva. In the absence of the Czar, his generals disputed for the command, and Charles unhesitatingly marched against them. A Russian army, which by the lowest estimate is numbered at 40,000 men, was defeated by a force of 8000. Snow blinded the Russian troops; their own dissensions paralysed them. The Swedish soldiers fell upon a disorganized host, and slaughtered and made prisoners on every side. The captives strangely were dismissed. Contempt more probably than clemency inspired Charles;

he had taught them, however, in the words of Peter, A.D.
how to conquer him hereafter.

The same contempt upon the part of Charles, during his wars in Poland, gave time and opportunity to the Russians for the pursuance of their policy. They strengthened their forces in the Baltic provinces, and won continuous if not brilliant successes. Among other captures Marienburg was taken, and in it the 1702 captive who was to become Catherine I. All Ingria gradually was made Russian. The swamps and forests at the mouth of the Neva were now reclaimed, and St. Petersburg was founded. The Baltic waters had 1703 thus been reached; and already foreign trade began to seek the newly opened empire. Charles might delude himself with the belief that he had but to turn upon the Russians and their retreat would be certain; but the steps which his proud indifference had allowed them to make were never afterwards to be retraced.

The time, however, came when he believed that he might turn to conquer and to treat at Moscow. The Polish war was ended; and the Russians found that his arms were at length to be seriously directed against themselves. They saw him turning upon Livonia, 1708 surprising and taking possession of the town of Grodno, crossing the Beresina, and defeating their forces in the bloody battle of Hollosin. They saw, and trembled. But the fortunes of Charles were now to forsake him. Instead of marching straight on Moscow, he was induced by the promises of Mazeppa, the chief of the Cossacks, to turn towards the south, in the hope of causing the revolt of those tribes. The time of the year, late

A.D. autumn, and his own imprudence, proved fatal to him.
— The cold was severe; supplies were wanting; the
convoy following him was cut off; and, finally, he
found that the promises of Mazeppa were unfulfilled,
and that the people had no mind to revolt with their
leader. The Russians watched the progress and the
disappointments of their foe. His own improvidence
had fought their cause: and now his pride refused to
spare the strength that yet remained to him, and
preferred the empty glory of overrunning the Ukraine
to securing winter quarters for his troops. The
succeeding summer beheld the Russians advancing
with a recruited army against an exhausted enemy.
Charles had besieged Pultawa, intending thence to
gain the road to Moscow; and here at length the Czar
1709 determined to give him battle. The engagement was
precipitated by the eagerness of the Swedish King;
his troops fought with the valour of their leader; but
after the second hour the flight began, and Charles
himself became a fugitive.

The alliance of the Northern Kingdoms forthwith
revived upon the news of this victory. Russia
returned at once to her schemes upon the Baltic, and
during the long retreat of Charles in Turkey succeeded
in conquering Carelia, Esthonia, and Livonia. The
operations in such a war have little interest: their
results, however, were permanent.

Meanwhile the King of Sweden, who had thus
abandoned his dominions to their fate, was urging the
Sultan into war; and his entreaties, added to an
already existing jealousy of the encroachments of the
Russian power, at length procured a declaration

against the Czar. What Charles had been unable to accomplish for himself was now accomplished by another hand; and a blow was inflicted upon Russia, which, had it been directed by the vigorous hand of the King of Sweden, might have changed the fortunes of the world. Peter, summoned from the north to protect his southern provinces, advanced towards the Danube. The Waivode of Moldavia met him, with promises as hopeful and as delusive as those of Mazeppa. Peter advanced, and found himself deceived. His little army of 40,000 men was threatened by a force six times as numerous; and on the banks of the Pruth the Russian army recognized that it was out-
1711
manœuvred, and that its supplies and its retreat were alike cut off. The Czar abandoned himself to despair. A woman rose to the occasion. Catherine, the slave of Marienburg, the now acknowledged wife of Peter, united, as has well been said, all woman's wit to all man's firmness. She gave the jewels and the gold that she possessed, she sought out all that the army could furnish, and with her treasure she bought a peace. Azof, the early conquest of the Czar, was surrendered; the Russian forts that threatened Turkey were to be demolished; the King of Sweden was to be allowed free passage to his dominions; and all interference on the part of Russia with the Poles, and with the Tartars who were dependent on the Porte, was to cease. The treaty added further that the Sultan was entreated to overlook the previous evil conduct of the Czar. Catherine had accepted for her nation the cup of humiliation; but she had preserved a husband and an army who might reconquer both the glory and the provinces which had now been lost.

A.D.

The Porte, now freed from molestation on the part of the Czar, relinquished all interference with his schemes. The affairs of the North engaged henceforth the attention of Peter; and his successes fully counter-
 1713 balanced the disasters in the South. Finland was overrun, and the Aland Isles were taken. Sweden appeared even to her enemies to be sufficiently weakened; and Peter, who had no mind to exalt unduly the power of Denmark or of Prussia, became willing to treat for peace. The project was even mooted of an alliance between the two powers, and of joint action with Spain against France and England. But the Czar, though willing to draw his profit from these schemes, seems never thoroughly to have entered into them; and the sudden death of Charles XII. put an end to their consideration. The weakness of succeeding sovereigns encouraged Russia to raise her terms; and,
 1721 in September, 1721, the Peace of Nystadt was signed, confirming to her Esthonia, Livonia, and Ingria, with parts of Finland and Carelia.*

The final conquests of the reign were made in Asia. The veteran armies that had fought upon the Baltic appeared under the Caucasus; and by concert with the Turks, his ancient enemies, the Czar attacked

* It was after the Peace of Nystadt that the title of Emperor was solemnly given to Peter the Great by the Senate and Clergy of the Empire. The Germans had translated the word Czar as Kaiser (Imperator) as early as 1491, during the negotiations between Ivan I. and Maximilian King of the Romans. England and the United Provinces had given the title to Peter after the battle of Pultawa; and France, Germany, Poland, Denmark, and Prussia, now recognized it, upon the assurance that no privilege or prerogative which did not exist before was thereby implied. Karamsin, VI. 274. Levesque, V. 89. Bray, *Histoire de la Livonie*, II. 323.

the Shah of Persia. By treaties in 1723 and 1724 the Russian Empire was extended along the shores of the Caspian to the mouth of the Araxes. The conquests at the time might seem too distant and too difficult of maintenance ; they were the example, however, and the excuse, for future progress.

Great measures for the internal development of his empire had continued to engage the attention of the Czar. St. Petersburg had grown, and had been recognized as the royal capital. An edict had compelled the boyars to build in the new town, and the transfer of the Senate in 1714 from the banks of the Moskwa to those of the Neva had made it permanently the seat of government. Facilities of trade were increased by the junction of the waters of the Volga and the Don ; and a communication by canal was to be formed which should unite the Baltic to the Caspian and the Euxine Seas. The intercourse with Siberia, and through it with China, was encouraged ; and a Russian settlement at Pekin continued to exist until the excesses of the traders caused their commerce to be forbidden. Thus working for his country, thus securing by every variety of undertaking its continued progress, Peter has justly earned from history the title of "the Great."

"I have reformed my country," were his words, "but I have not been able to reform myself." The savage passions, which have seemed so often the inheritance of his race, burst forth at times and degraded the man. Rude and unpolished in his personal habits and manners, hard and unsoftened in his temper of mind, he is said to have made it his aim to imitate

A.D. his great predecessor, Ivan the Terrible ; and he succeeded unhappily too well. Himself assisting at scenes of blood, he showed that the idea of carnage was not repellent to him. The fate of his son Alexis, too sad a parallel to that of Don Carlos in Spain, is often recorded against him. Determined, and perhaps
1719 wisely so, upon the disinheritance of his son, he summoned a tribunal to justify the act ; and the death of Alexis, following speedily upon the sentence of his disinheritance, gave rise to stories which showed at least the light in which the father was regarded. Peter had dealt with his son in a stern spirit that even in the days of Rome was viewed with terror rather than with applause.

Catherine, for whom alone he seems to have always
1724 preserved his admiration, received the final proof of affection in the last year of his reign. By one of his decrees the Czar had ordered that the succession to the crown should henceforth pass to such member of the royal family as the reigning sovereign should deem most worthy of it. Recalling now the precedents afforded by divers Emperors of the East, the Czar of Russia published his decree for the solemn coronation of his wife as Empress ; nor can it well be doubted but that such an act was meant to prepare the way for her eventual succession. As, in the month of January, 1725, Peter lay speechless and dying on his couch, the archbishop of Pleskof declared in the ante-chamber that such indeed had been the intention of the Czar expressed on the eve of the ceremony. Peter himself, from the sudden nature of his attack, had no power to deny or to confirm it. "Give all," had he

written, but then his powers had failed, and no one knew to whom he intended that all should be given. The presumption, however, was in favour of Catherine. Menschikof, once her master, and still the most powerful of the Russian nobles, was on her side; others were won over; and on the very evening of the Czar's death she had secured in peace the succession to his throne.

A period follows, extending over thirty-seven years, 1725-62 and lasting until the accession of Catherine II., which is full of changes, and which has few events of greatness. During this period six sovereigns mounted to the throne. Two died within three years of their accession. Two were deposed within some months. The law of Peter concerning the succession to the crown had opened the way to disputes and jealousies. No two of these six sovereigns succeeded in hereditary line; and the nation was disgraced by contests and by crimes in the pursuit of power.

The Empress Catherine I. atoned for her deficiencies of birth and education by her gentleness of disposition. Supported by the favour of the nobles, and by the supposed intentions of her great husband, she retained the crown until her death in 1727. Peter II., the son of that Alexis, whom his father had condemned, succeeded, but lived only for three years. His reign was disturbed by factions, which secured the exile of the great Menschikof to Siberia; but his possession of the throne remained undisputed. At his death, however, in 1730, the want of a regularly established order of succession appeared. The nobles, desirous of extending their privileges at the expense of those of

A.D. the crown, preferred a sovereign whose weak title
— should secure for them concessions. Upon the plea, therefore, that with the failure of the male descendants of Peter the Great the succession should revert to the descendants of his elder brother Ivan, they offered the crown to Anne, the daughter of the half-witted Emperor. The new sovereign, consenting to all that she was asked, ascended the throne; but she deceived the hopes of many of her subjects. The influence of a favourite, Biren, who followed her from Courland, has caused her reign to be a dark one. Cruel and despotic, even over his sovereign, this man inaugurated a reign of blood. “God is too good,” said an English envoy, “to count against me the years that I have spent in that unhappy country.” It is only in the foreign enterprises of her reign that are to be found redeeming
1733 features. To her troops alone was left the execution of the design which placed Augustus III. of Saxony upon the throne of Poland, and defeated the hopes of Stanislaus and of the French. She was again the first to attempt to revenge on Turkey the disaster of the
1736 Pruth; and an attack on Azof during a time of peace, and successive devastations of the Crimea, though not honourable to her generals, made her enemies tremble. She gave an example to her successors in making demands upon the Porte which even our own age has never seen out-done. The cession of the Crimea, the independence of Moldavia and Wallachia under Russian suzerainty, and the free navigation of the Bosphorus were required; and had it not been that the Austrians, upon whose alliance the Russians had relied, were ingloriously defeated upon the Danube, and that a

peace became necessary, she might at least have secured more than the slight increase of her territory in the Ukraine, which was all the advantage that she eventually obtained. A.D. 1739

Upon the death of Anne, in 1740, the evils of Peter's law were again apparent. To secure a regency for her favourite the Empress had been induced to leave the crown to her grand-nephew, a child of a few months old, who was proclaimed as Ivan VI. Conspiracy succeeded to conspiracy. Biren, detested, was displaced and exiled; and the mother of the Czar was appointed regent. But the ambition of Elizabeth, the still surviving daughter of Peter the Great, was now aroused; and a new conspiracy consigned the infant Emperor to a prison and his parents to Siberia. Elizabeth restored the crown to the direct descendants of her great father; but even she was not his lineal heir, and she ruled to the prejudice of her elder sister's son, who did not obtain the throne until her death in 1761. 1741

The reign of Elizabeth, if it had not been disgraced and enfeebled by her private vices, might have become glorious and all powerful in Europe. Its early triumphs excited hopes and jealousies at once. Sweden, which had rashly entered upon war with Russia, was punished by the loss of Finland. Europe beheld with anxiety the successor of Charles XII. surrendering his dominions to a rapacious and advancing foe. The downfall of the country was complete. No Roman senator, as it was said, had ever lorded it among barbarian Gauls as any Russian might now do in the streets of Stockholm; and the one check to Russian supremacy in the north appeared to have been removed.

A.D.

But the triumph of Russia soon leagued new enemies against her. A confederation was formed of Prussia, France, and Sweden, with a view to secure the balance of power in the north. The Empress was indignant, and threatened war. It came not indeed at once; but the seeds of dissatisfaction had been sown; irritation steadily developed; and when Frederick the Great became involved in his Seven Years War, and the persuasions of Austria came, strengthening the thoughts of resentment, the declaration of it was made. Elizabeth had it now in her power to crush her enemy and to mould the destinies of central Europe. She had not vigour of mind, however, for the task. She was irritated, and she was ambitious; but she was also indolent and vacillating; and her character gave its colouring to all the operations of the war. Her armies hung threatening like a vast cloud over Prussia; but they hesitated in the pursuit of victory; and when they had gained it they did not profit by it.

1757 At Gross Jagersdorf they conquered; and, though at
 1758 Zorndorf they lost the day, they seemed again at
 1759 Cunersdorf to hold the Prussian monarch at their
 1760 mercy. Berlin itself was entered in 1760. Yet no advantage was ever gained by these victories. The Russian generals inexplicably retreated; and in spite of Austrian entreaties refused to follow up their successes. As the health of Elizabeth declined she became less capable of directing affairs. Her nephew and successor was inclined to peace; and no general was disposed to incur his displeasure. So the war
 1761 languished; until, in 1761, the death of the Empress occurred, and Peter III. at once proposed the alliance which had been so long expected.

The new sovereign was the son of Anne, the elder sister of Elizabeth, who had married a prince of Holstein. He had an unbounded admiration for the King of Prussia; and Frederick had cultivated his friendship, in anticipation of the value which it might prove. Above all had the Czar been gratified by the promise that Prussia should conclude no alliance with the Danes, against whom, from connection with Sleswig, he had cause for resentment. The peace between the two sovereigns was accordingly soon made; and Peter at once began to think of commencing operations against Denmark. The idea of such a war was eminently unpopular; but the Emperor's character appears to have been singularly devoid of judgment, and the preparations were continued. At the same time changes of all kinds in the internal administration were made: the lands of the clergy were taken from them; and leaders, who commanded the sympathies and the reverence of the people, were thus given to the spirit of dissatisfaction. The result of these measures was a plot within the palace, which within a few months of his accession deprived the Emperor both of his throne and of his life.

Peter had married in 1744 the princess Sophia Augusta of Anhalt Zerbst, who with the Greek religion had adopted a new name, and was thenceforth known as Catherine. Of a haughty and ambitious nature, she had irritated her husband by taking privileges upon herself which were reserved for the Emperor alone, and by an adulterous intrigue. In his wrath Peter had threatened her with a convent; and from that moment she conspired his end. The tutor of her

A.D. son, and certain of the guard, who felt aggrieved in consequence of the strictness of new rules, were won over; and an opportunity alone was wanted, when, as so often is the case, the designs of the conspirators were hastened to their end by a betrayal on the part of an accomplice. Peter was at Oranienbaum, preparing to take the command of his Danish expedition, when the treachery of Catherine was revealed to him. At first he refused to believe, then hesitated until too late; and finally, when he could neither fly nor defend himself, he surrendered as prisoner to Catherine and her advancing forces. An act of abdication was signed; but the fate which has rarely been found to spare a deposed monarch followed him, and within a few days his subjects were called upon to view the
1762 remains of their late Emperor, whom an internal colic, as it was said, had destroyed.

Thus was inaugurated the reign of Catherine II., a woman whose capacities were early felt to be great, but were great for evil as well as for good. She could murder a husband to take her seat upon his vacant throne, and she now, like an Eastern Sultan, secured herself in the possession of it by ordering the death of the young Ivan, who had once been Emperor, and who might become her rival. She was without scruple in the gratification of her passions, and without delicacy in their concealment; and a succession of lovers, installed ostentatiously in her palace, proclaimed to the world the shamelessness of their mistress. Yet she was great undoubtedly as a sovereign. With a clear and cultivated intellect, with high aims and breadth of views, and fearless because despising the

opinions of others, she could plan and she could achieve her country's greatness; and in the extended dominions and improved civilization which she bequeathed to her successor is found a true claim to the gratitude of her subjects.

The foreign transactions of the reign begin with the history of Poland. With Frederick of Prussia, Catherine may be said to have shared both the scheme of partition and the spoils that followed. If it is doubtful which originated the transaction, there is at least no doubt but that Russian policy had prepared the way for such a measure. Augustus III. had died in 1763, and the influence of Catherine had placed her 1763 favourite, Stanislaus, upon his throne. There was no longer the union of Poland with a foreign crown; and, agreeably to old tradition, surrounding kingdoms had looked complacently upon a plan which relieved them from the dread of a neighbour's power, and had forgotten that they were thus weakening the barrier which they should have strengthened against Russian aggression. The designs of Catherine prospered. She had secured a sovereign with no resources but those of his Polish subjects to support him; and she now prepared to neutralize even those resources by fomenting dissensions which would place the kingdom at her mercy. Religious toleration for the Greek church was demanded and obtained from an obsequious Diet. The members of the Roman communion were at once aroused, and, declaring that their own privileges were threatened, commenced a series of tumults and of violences which became the excuse for the appearance of Russian troops upon the scene. From Poland the

A.D. — accidental burning of a frontier town led on to Turkey. The Porte, uneasily regarding Russian progress, determined to make the accident a cause for war; and Catherine, at once accepting the challenge, marched forward her armies to conquer and to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia. The central powers of Europe were dismayed. Austria prepared to unite with Turkey, to repel so formidable a foe; and Prussia, determined to maintain some balance of power, began to scheme a counteraction of the Russian gains. Poland fell victim
1772 to the times. The partition between the three powers was the reward to Russia for her exertions, the compensation to Prussia for a neighbour's greatness, and the alternative accepted by Austria to prevent the establishment of Russian power upon the Danube. To the world the justification of the deed seemed difficult; to those who had been concerned it was easier. Both Frederick and Maria Theresa regarded it as a solution of difficulties; and Catherine, with greater boldness, setting forward the dissensions that herself had caused, claimed even the praises of a benefactor for having put an end to anarchy.

The war with Turkey was closed with equal profit and yet greater glory to the Russian Empire. The Russian armies had fought and conquered upon the soil of Moldavia, and had invaded and occupied the Crimea. At the same time the Russian fleets, no longer confining themselves to the Baltic or Black Seas, had sailed round Europe, and had appeared in the Archipelago. An insurrection of the Greeks had aided their design; and for a time the Bosphorus and Constantinople had been threatened. The great Em-

press of the North had dazzled Europe by the vastness of her power and designs ; and Turkey, exhausted and unequal to further contest, was constrained to purchase 1774 peace. A.D. —

The possession of Azof, Kertch, Yenikale, and Kinburn, the free navigation of the Euxine and the Mediterranean, were the immediate gains of Russia. A stipulation for the better treatment of the Principalities, and for the rights of remonstrance, both in their behalf, and in that of the Greek church at Constantinople, gave the opening for future advantages. Another clause assured the independence of the Khan of the Crimea, and of the Tartars inhabiting the northern shores of the Black Sea. Under the name of liberty, these tribes were now, like Poland, deprived of every strength except their own ; and the way was prepared for their annexation by Russia.

The Peace of Kainardji, as this settlement was called, was signed in 1774. Within ten years dissensions had arisen within the Crimea, and both 1784 Turks and Russians had appeared upon the scene. The forces of Catherine passed the isthmus as allies of the reigning Khan ; but they remained to receive his abdication, and to become the masters of his country. At the same time the Kuban was entered and subdued by Souvarof, and thus already the Caucasus was reached.

Catherine was now at the height of her power. In a triumphant progress she visited her new dominions, and gave the august name of Sebastopol to a new city which was already destined to be the scourge of the Turkish Empire. She believed herself to be upon

A.D. the road to Constantinople; and, in the interviews
— which she held with the Emperor Joseph II., she
began to scheme for the partition of Turkey, as she
had done for that of Poland. A second grandson,
who was born to her in 1778, received the name of
Constantine. Greek nurses and Greek teachers were
employed to train the child; and none now doubted
but that he was destined by the Empress for the
throne of the Sultans and the Cæsars. The Turks
themselves beheld uneasily her progress and her
designs; and, believing that their safety lay in action,
declared war. The Empress now found herself
assailed in two distinct quarters. Gustavus III. of
1778 Sweden, allying with the Sultan, invaded Finland;
and in her palace at St. Petersburg the Empress
heard the Swedish guns. She was relieved, however,
on the north by the dissension in the Swedish army,
which compelled the King to an inglorious retreat;
and she became able to give an undivided attention
to the affairs of the south. While an Austrian army,
which supported her, was threatening the north-west
of Turkey, her own forces conquered in the north-
east. Under Souvarof the town of Oczakof was
taken, and the battle of Rimnik was won. Ismail,
that gave the key of the Danube, next fell, and in
the horrors of its fall drew forth a cry from Europe.
The triumph of Catherine was assured; but already
the clouds of revolution had risen in the west;
Austria, too busy with the affairs of the Netherlands,
had withdrawn from the fight; and the Empress
herself, disquieted, and satisfied for the time with her
1792 successes, concluded the Peace of Jassy, which ex-

tended her frontiers to the Dniester, and gave her the coast on which so soon arose the rich city of Odessa. A.D. —

The acquisitions of Catherine upon the south were completed. Those upon the west had still to receive important additions. Poland, already once partitioned was again to yield new provinces to Russia. In 1772 almost the whole of Lithuania had been gained. In 1793 and 1795 her acquisitions were even more important. As the revolutionary wars of France began, Prussia, distracted from her eastern frontier, began to repent that her barrier against Russia had not been strengthened, and was willing to repair her error by attempting to re-establish the Polish monarchy upon a firm and hereditary basis. The design was at once resented by Catherine. Her armies, profiting by the absence of the King of Prussia, marched into Poland; and Frederick William, afraid to leave the west, allured also by the hopes of sharing in the booty, abandoned his old policy and his old allies, and agreed to that second dismemberment, which gave to Russia Podolia, the Ukraine, and the rest of Lithuania. It can hardly seem surprising that such proceedings in such an age should have stirred a patriotic insurrection in Poland. The attempts at freedom and the defeat of Kosciuszko followed. Prussian armies entered the country, to be followed in their turn by Russian. Souvarof, the terror of the Turks, now gave a parallel to his slaughter at Ismail by his sack of Praga the suburb of Warsaw; and the doom of the whole country was sealed. Russia appropriated to herself Courland and

A.D. 1795 Volhynia as far as the Niemen and the Boug; Prussia and Austria shared in what was left; and the Polish people were no more a nation.

The gain of Russia was enormous. Not only had she annihilated the kingdom which had stood for centuries between her and the rest of Europe, but she had inserted the wedge of her power between the dominions of Prussia and of Austria. An army concentrated near Warsaw had but to turn to the right and enter Prussia, to the left and Austria was equally accessible. Berlin and Vienna might both be threatened, while St. Petersburg could afford to despise even the combination of her adversaries.

The internal government of the Empire was meant undoubtedly to rival these foreign successes, but unhappily fell short of them. Catherine, bold and ambitious, with a strong common sense and an intellect that had been trained by the love of books and by an intercourse with the great spirits of the age, commenced designs which would have alarmed a weaker mind or one less fearless of innovations. The long meditated secularization of the estates of the clergy was at last accomplished; the freedom of the serfs was now first urged; and, as a unique experiment in Russian history, the convoking of a kind of States General was made to discuss the project. But both project and parliament came to nothing, and only swelled the number of those attempts for good which remained without completion. A code of laws, and a system of national education, were also planned; the colonization by German settlers of the unpeopled southern provinces was begun; and the earlier years

of the reign gave a hope that durable and worthy monuments of greatness might be left to posterity. Potemkin, at once, as so often in Russia, the minister to the passions as well as to the policy of his mistress, shared with her the glory of the great conceptions which marked these years. But the very vastness of the Imperial projects checked their growth. The wars exhausted the revenues. They began to build, but were not able to finish. In addition to this, a plague depopulated the southern and central districts; and Moscow alone is said to have lost inhabitants to the number of 90,000. Another cause of failure is also to be found in the multitude of foreigners that were invited to assist in the civilization of the rising Empire. The Germans more particularly, from the knowledge which they often really had, but still oftener only professed, were selected as directors of the public works and stewards of the royal and private domains. In such positions they became extortioners and tyrants; and, with no love of country or of countrymen to soften them, were heartless defrauders both of the peasant and the State for their own enrichment. The pride of Catherine is said to have refused to believe in the failure of many of her designs, and the courtly flattery of ministers to have supported her delusions. The memorable progress to the South, the happy peasants that lined the roads, and that travelled on by night, to appear again as joyful and as deceiving the next day, were but one instance of the general conduct of affairs. There was much that was unreal in everything, and Europe, as well as the great Empress herself, was deceived. And so it

A.D. came to pass that at the close of the reign there
1796 was the spectacle of much that had been begun
but little finished.

Before the death of Catherine, in fact, her greatness may be said to have passed away. Yet the territorial acquisitions which she had made remained, and were greater strides to European power than any which had preceded or have followed them. They had roused the national ambition; and the early years of the succeeding reign appeared to give the opportunity of pushing them still further. The revolution in France had run its course; and Switzerland was now occupied by French armies. Austria, fearful for herself, appealed to the old friendship of Russia; and Russia, scheming for her own advantage, and impelled
1799 by the ambition of Paul I., accepted the alliance. The name of Souvarof was again invoked. A Russian army under his command was sent to Italy; and the Ionian islands were occupied by the Russian troops. But the fear of projects which these preparations might imply, and jealousies and misunderstandings which arose between the allies, defeated the conclusion of any great design; and after a glorious but disastrous retreat over the mountains of Switzerland the Russians returned to their own country.

The struggle between East and West had only begun: it was reserved for the eventful reign of Alexander I. to finish it. On the 22nd of March, 1801, Paul I. was murdered in his palace. He had been, from want of early training, and perhaps from want of intellect, a weak sovereign. Haunted moreover throughout his life by the remembrance of his father's

death, his suspicions had led him into acts of caprice and tyranny that had at length even given ground for the belief that his reason was forsaking him. In the last year of his reign, succumbing to the influence of Napoleon, he had deserted his allies, and had ranged himself upon the French side. He had even united in the Maritime Confederacy against the naval power of England. His successor, in view of the commercial interests of his subjects, preferred to return to the old alliance, and endeavoured for a time to live at peace with all Europe. He had not abandoned the thoughts of territorial increase. Georgia, placed under his protectorate, was soon incorporated with the Empire; and the Ionian islands remained still occupied by his troops. But Alexander, if he shared the designs of Catherine, would have preferred to accomplish them by diplomacy rather than by war.

It was not until the year 1804 that the country began again to draw towards the whirlpool of European politics. The arrogant proceedings of Napoleon had irritated the Czar; and, the murder of the Duke of Enghien completing his alienation, he united with England, Sweden, and Austria, and prepared to meet his enemy. Russian troops, advancing through Moravia to the Danube, took part in the struggles that preceded Austerlitz. But the allies whom they were sent to help were already broken, and their undaunted valour could not prevent the final victory 1805 of Napoleon. The Emperor Alexander arrived to see his army conquered under his own eyes; and, while the Austrians were accepting peace at Presburg, was compelled to withdraw the remainder of his forces

A.D. under a truce to their own country. For a time he
— could only study how to renew the contest under
more favourable auspices.

The war which he had sought soon rolled itself to his own gates. The humiliation of Austria had left Napoleon free to conquer in the North; and the conduct of Prussia, who had finally acceded to the coalition of the Northern Powers, had provoked the
1806 advance which renewed the triumphs of Austerlitz at Jena, and brought the French armies to the very frontiers of Russia. Alexander, forestalled in his preparations by the rapidity of Napoleon, could only meet him after his entry into Poland. The battle of Pultusk was fought, but was indecisive. Six weeks
1807 elapsed, and the bloody field of Eylau, though not checking the advance, had earned for Russia the respect of Europe. But the battle of Friedland followed; and Alexander, retreating beyond the Niemen, became compelled to treat for peace.

Sympathetic and impulsive, the Czar now fell completely under the ascendancy of Napoleon; and the Peace of Tilsit in appearance made the enemies the firmest friends. Ostensibly Russia was submitting as a conquered power: she was renouncing her influence upon the Continent; she was being drawn from her old allies, and was being forced even to turn against them, by having to accept the Continental System of Napoleon; she was recognizing the kingdoms of Naples, of Holland, of Westphalia, and the Confederation of the Rhine; and all that she received appeared to be the little province of Bialystock in Prussia. But by secret articles the Peace was giving her one

half of the world. The enemies were now confederates. While Napoleon remained free to conquer and subdue the West of Europe, Alexander was to extend his power undisturbed over the East. All Sweden and Turkey, with the one exception of Constantinople, might be his, until there should remain no longer any power in Europe but an Empire of the East and of the West.

The partition, perhaps, was an unequal one; yet the acceptance of it gave Russia profit out of her defeat. "We have drugged the Emperor Alexander," said the French; but, while they boasted, Sweden was attacked under the convenient pretext of enforcing the Continental System, and Finland was added to the dominions of the Czar. A war with Turkey followed. During the campaign of Jena, Moldavia and Wallachia had been occupied; but the Peace of Tilsit had restored them momentarily to the Porte. Now, there was no hindrance to the resumption of the strife; and a defeat at Silistria, and the loss of Schumla, the key to the Balkan, struck terror into the Turks. Alexander was profiting by his opportunities. If the war with France had yet to come, he might at least in the meanwhile make the most of his respite.

Distrust was gradually arising between the two confederates. The Russians viewed with jealousy the constitution of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw upon their frontiers. They felt moreover that the treatment of Holland, the annexation of the Valais, and finally the proposal to extend the French empire to Lubeck, with the sacrifice of the Duke of Oldenburg's dominions, were warnings as to the sincerity of their ally. The

A.D. Czar protested at the Courts of Europe in favour of
—— the Duke his brother-in-law; and, shaken in his
friendship with Napoleon, abandoned the Continental
System, by opening his ports to English merchandise
under a neutral flag, to the great joy of his commercial
subjects. Napoleon was naturally indignant at the
conduct of his ally; and war was evidently at hand.
A peace with the Turks, who were now enlightened as
to the fate to which France had consented for them,
was concluded by Alexander; and while Russia, by
the treaty of Bucharest, gained the frontier of the
Pruth, she became free to give an undivided attention
to the coming strife.

1811 The declaration of war had been made in 1811. In
1812 Napoleon appeared with half a million men in
Poland. To describe the suspense of Europe, the
advance in which the army wasted, the retreat in
which it was destroyed, is superfluous in this chapter.
The patient heroism of the Russians was the salvation
of their country and the deliverance of Europe. As
the tide of the French fortunes turned, the uprising
became general. Then followed a year during which
the Russians advancing into Germany collected round
them the reviving nations of the continent. Prussia,
Sweden, Austria, now joined against their stricken
foe. In Saxony there were battles fought, in which
new levies under Napoleon attempted, and not with-
out success, to check the progress of the Allies. But
the fate of kingdoms hung no longer on a single battle
or a single day. The successes of the English in Spain
combined to weaken the resources of the French;
and Napoleon, recognizing at length his danger, began

to retreat in the direction of the French frontier, towards which the might of Russia was now leading a united Europe. Then came the tremendous struggle and defeat of Leipzig; and the retreat was made a rout. The wavering kingdoms of Bavaria, Wurtemberg, and Baden, united with the Allies; and by the close of the year the confederates, still led by Russia, were crossing the Rhine, the natural frontier, as it still was held to be, of France.

In the events that succeeded, during 1814, the 1814 Russians were still foremost. When the genius of Napoleon prolonged resistance, and still with far inferior forces was able to inflict defeats upon his advancing enemies, it was the firmness of the Emperor Alexander that prevailed over the hesitation of the Allies, and secured the continuance of the contest. It was Alexander again who urged the march on Paris during the absence of Napoleon; and in the entry to the capital, and in the negotiations which immediately followed at the Congress of Vienna, it was still on him as on the leader of the conquerors, that the eyes of France and Europe were turned with anxiety and admiration.

The war so far as Russia was concerned was over. The return of Napoleon and the Hundred Days might threaten but could not subvert her work. Armies less distant but not less brave than her own confirmed it; and in the victory of Waterloo and the second entry into Paris she beheld the assurance of all for which she had fought, through a renewal of her own triumphs.

The gain that she now reaped was great. The wide

A.D. — province of Finland, that extended almost from St. Petersburg to the extreme north of the Gulf of Bothnia, was confirmed to her. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw, containing four million inhabitants, and stretching over a space one half as large again as Ireland, was erected into a kingdom, and annexed to the dominions of the Czar, to be ruled by him as Hungary was by the Emperor of Austria. While the metropolis of Russia was covered and defended, the outposts of its power were pushed forward. The new kingdom of Poland advanced like a great bastion into Europe, and Warsaw was within 180 miles of Berlin and of Vienna.

Alexander himself would have wished for even more; and his ambition had at one time threatened to cause war among the allies. But the united firmness of England, France, and Austria, and the increased prestige of the Western Powers after the victory at Waterloo, became sufficient to restrain him. Before his reign, however, was closed, he was able to add still further to his dominions; for a treaty with Persia extended his empire between the Black Sea and the Caspian, and the claim of earliest occupation added a vast territory in America to the empire which already covered the half of Europe and of Asia. The full extent, however, of all that he had dreamt was not to be realized. Generous and enthusiastic, he had believed in a regeneration of Europe, and in opening the dawn of a new era in which religion and virtue rather than strife and ambition should govern the world. After the close of the great war he had united in a Holy Alliance with Austria and Prussia for this

end ; but the first act of the Alliance had been to crush a revolution in Italy ; and the suspicions of Europe had been too ready to declare that the league was for the benefit of princes rather than of people. The closing years of Alexander's life were saddened and harassed by the opposition and even by the conspiracies of those who could not believe in him. Like Joseph II., with a great mind and great ideas, but too unpractical and too visionary for his age, he was condemned to be misunderstood.

His death in 1825 was the occasion for a display of 1825 generosity that is rare in the annals of Russia. The heir to the throne was his brother the Grand Duke Constantine ; but by a family arrangement he had been induced to forego his rights, and he now urged a younger brother, Nicholas, to accept the crown. For a time the brothers contended in generous self-denial ; but the determination of Constantine was firm, and Nicholas became Czar. It was not possible, however, to cause the entire nation to understand or to accept the arrangement ; and revolutionary agitators, who worked upon the popular ignorance, excited an insurrection, which in its occurrence, and in the severity attending its repression, was of unfavourable augury for the reign.

Stern and practical, the character of Nicholas became a contrast to that of his gentle and almost mystical predecessor. The great designs of Alexander, his schemes for the regeneration of the world, and for the reign of virtue, were unfulfilled, uncared for, and perhaps uncomprehended. The new Czar, essentially a man of war, preferred to tread in other paths.

A.D. Russia was still to be made great ; but it was to be by
— a material rather than a moral greatness.

The grandson of Catherine had not abandoned her designs. Constantinople was still the object of the Russian hopes, and the cause of their wars. One of
1826 the earliest acts of Nicholas was the signing of the Convention of Akkerman, a termination, as it professed to be, of long pending negotiations, concerning the fulfilment of former treaties, a fertile pretext, as Russia might hope to make it, for future interference with the Porte. The Czar was now definitely recognized as the protector of the Principalities ; and his new office was speedily made use of to strengthen fresh demands upon the Porte.

The Emperor Alexander had seen in 1821 the beginning of the insurrection that was to end in the independence of Greece. Conscience or policy had restrained him from interfering in the strife ; but Nicholas, less fearful or less scrupulous, was prepared at once to act. Uniting with France and England he joined in 1827 in a treaty for the erection of Greece into a tributary State ; and when the Sultan rejected interference, and refused to cease from war, his ships
1827 were sharers in the glory or the shame of the destruction of the Turkish fleet in the bay of Navarino. Then came recriminations ; and while the Sultan protested against the conduct of the Czar, the Czar protested against the conduct of the Sultan towards his Christian subjects. War was soon declared ; and
1828 the Russians now fought for their own interests as well as for the Greeks. Already Nicholas had conquered in 1827 the provinces of Erivan and

Nakhitchewan from the Persians. He had now an entrance to the Turkish provinces in Asia, and the fight was waged under the Caucasus as well as upon the Danube. A.D. ———

Two years went by. During the first the courage of the Turks maintained the struggle doubtful upon the Danube, but could not avail to save their Asiatic pashalics which fell before the arms of Paskiewitch, a name already celebrated in the Persian war. The following year saw great successes. While the Russian standards were advanced to Erzeroum, the centre of the Turkish power in Asia, the happy audacity of General Diebitsch was pushing them forward for the first time across the Balkans as far even as Adrianople. The Turkish fortresses along the Danube had fallen; but their camp at Schumla was still unbroken; and a native army, had it arisen in the North, might have cut off and crushed the invaders. But the boldness of Diebitsch was justified by his success. The pashas of the north, uncertain in their allegiance, delayed to come forward in the cause of their master. Adrianople was occupied; the Russian outposts were extended, until they reached on either side to the Mediterranean and the Black Seas; and the Sultan, beholding Constantinople itself surrounded, and his enemies within twenty miles of his capital, was compelled with tears to sign the treaty of Adrianople.

An extended territory in Asia and Europe was the double fruit of these successes. Russia received some islands in the Danube, and the command of the Sulina mouth of that river. Her claims to many provinces of the Caucasus were recognized; and a tract of

A.D. country around Poti was ceded to her. Two continents
again were sensible of her encroachments; and the Euxine was already threatening to become a Russian lake. At the same time the stipulations for the independence of the Principalities under a Russian protectorate were renewed, and the arrangements for the erection of Greece into a separate State were acknowledged. The hand of the Czar was felt to the south as well as to the north of Constantinople, it had compressed the circle of the Turkish dominion, and had prepared for itself new opportunities of future interference.

Insurrection had been made for a time to aid in the designs of Nicholas; it soon threatened to retard
1831 them. The Poles aspired to emulate the conduct of the Greeks, and to re-assert their independence as a nation. Bravely, obstinately, they fought; they were defeated with honour, and they defeated in their turn with glory: and their valour cost the lives of 180,000 men to Russia. But the armies of Poland were limited, while those of Russia were comparatively exhaustless; and a loss that was merely serious to the one power was fatal to the other. The Poles, less fortunate than the Greeks, were moreover unsupported; for Austria was too timid, and France and England were too busy with their own affairs to do more than sympathize with a cause which it might have been their interest to defend. Russia crushed them to the ground. Their kingdom was declared to be for ever incorporated with the empire; and the fetters of subjection were riveted more surely and more sternly than ever.

Again the Czar was able to turn towards Constantinople; and here events were strangely opening a way to his interference. The empire of the Sultan was falling to decay. Greece had been lost for ever; the Principalities had secured a virtual independence; and now a more formidable blow than all had been dealt to Turkey in the rebellion and the successes of the Pasha of Egypt. With his armies defeated, Asia Minor 1832 overrun, and Constantinople threatened, the Sultan was trembling for his throne; and, after vainly imploring the help of England, he threw himself a suppliant into the arms of Russia. The Czar at once espoused the cause of his old foe; there were advantages that might be gained by peace as well as war; and Russian ships and soldiers hastened to the defence of Constantinople. The Western powers in fear and jealousy attempted to avert their presence; but the need became urgent, the troops were disembarked, and 1833 their presence, while it secured the city, became a claim to its future gratitude. The Czar of Russia reaped his advantage in the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi which was now concluded with him by the Porte. The two Powers bound themselves in an alliance; and the Porte engaged, in case of war, to close the passage of the Bosphorus, an act which was almost the same as giving the control over the Straits to the Emperor himself.

Years followed, during which the great designs of Nicholas appeared to slumber, and wars that menaced Asia more than Europe engaged his attention. Unsatisfied with a territory almost as vast as England, which his early conquests had acquired from Persia,

A.D. he still aimed at the extension of his power, and even perhaps at the opening of a way for himself to India. A tedious struggle was begun against the mountain tribes of the Caucasus, whose independence threatened danger to the neighbouring province. Persia was 1836 being urged to attempt the conquest of Herat, the key 1840 to India; and Russian armies were marching to effect the annexation of Khiva. The success of these undertakings was but partial. The war in the Caucasus, though finally successful, was prolonged into another reign; the influence of England procured the withdrawal of the Persians from before Herat; and a winter whose severity was almost as fatal to the Russians as that of 1812 had been to the French, protected Khiva. Asia was in its turn abandoned; and Europe again received the larger share of the attention of the Emperor.

The repression of independence, so consonant to the despotic mind of Nicholas, gave speedy occupation to his armies. The Republic of Cracow, the last surviving fragment of Poland, had been long the refuge of conspirators, and now became the centre of an insur- 1846 rection whose aims were too subversive of all established principles to be for a moment tolerated; and Russia joined with Austria and Prussia for the suppression of the Republic. In 1849 the rising of Hungary against Austria was again an incident which called forth her interference. The spirit of revolution, though not manifesting itself within her own frontier, was too detestable to be permitted to achieve a triumph; and Marshal Paskiewitch, already famous through his campaigns in Asia, acquired new glory by his reduction

of the insurgent kingdom, and by restoring to the House of Austria an almost lost authority. A.D.

Turkey it seemed was the one power against whom all risings were pardonable. The Czar still looked with longing eyes towards Constantinople. He desired if possible to secure the co-operation of England in his designs; and he had held out promises to English ministers of a share of spoil. His overtures indeed had met with no response; but still his schemes advanced, and a dispute, which rose in 1851 between some Greek and Latin monks, concerning privileges at the Holy Sepulchre, became a welcome opportunity for their development. It mattered little that these differences were accommodated; the moment was too good a one to be passed by; and the Czar put forward the demand that the Porte should thenceforth recognize him as the protector of the Greek Christians not only at Constantinople but throughout its dominions. The unwillingness of the Sultan to accede to a proposal, which would in effect have divided the allegiance of ten millions of his subjects, was strengthened by the influence of England, and the demand was refused. The Russian armies at once occupied the Principalities, 1853 and war was begun.

During the autumn of 1853 the Russians destroyed the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Sinope, but were bravely met upon the Danube, and even suffered occasional defeats. In the next year they besieged 1854 Silistria, but in vain; and, the courage of the Turks and the remonstrances of Europe at length prevailing, the Czar withdrew within his own frontiers, and allowed the Principalities to rest in the neutral hands

A.D. of Austria. But the flame that had been kindled was not now to be extinguished. England and France had entered as allies of Turkey into the strife, and the passions that had been aroused could only rest when the power of Russia had been humbled. The two great nations of the West united to pour their armies upon the East. The capture of Sebastopol, a fortress and an arsenal whose strength had made it seem a constant menace to Constantinople, became their object. The Euxine was navigable for their fleets; and their armies landed upon the shores of the Crimea. As the united hosts advanced from their disembarkation the first shock of war was felt. By the river Alma the Russians were defeated. Their enemies advanced to lay siege to Sebastopol, and to win another victory under the heights of Inkerman. The wasted opportunities of the Allies, and the skill and the endurance of the Russian garrison, made the siege one of eleven months; but the country groaned under the sacrifices and the exhaustion which were entailed upon it; and the Emperor Nicholas himself, the conqueror in Asia and in Europe, who had believed himself to be still invincible, went down to his grave in 1855 worn out, as it was said, by the reverses of the war.

1855 A new sovereign succeeded to the throne of Russia in anxious times. Sebastopol, the pride of the empire, was doomed; the shores of the Baltic, of the White Sea, and even of the Pacific, had been made to tremble before the fleets of the Allies; and peace was fast becoming a necessity. Alexander II. beheld the fall of his great fortress, and yielded to his destiny. By the

Peace of Paris, in 1856, the frontiers of Russia, for the first time since the disaster of the Pruth, were pushed back; the Empire made, and did not receive concessions. She restored the mouths of the Danube to Turkey; she abandoned the exclusive protectorate over the Principalities; Sebastopol, it was stipulated, was to remain a ruin; and the Black Sea, which had been intended to become a Russian lake, was declared neutral; while the number of armed vessels which Russia might maintain on it was limited to six. A.D.
1856

A turning point had come in the history of the empire. An age of military despotism, which the great triumphs of the preceding reigns had in a measure sanctified, was over. The stern severity of Nicholas, which had cramped, while he believed it to have been extending, the strength of his empire was now replaced by the milder and more elastic rule of a successor. Alexander II. had met misfortune, and had learnt his lessons. His task was to repair the weaknesses that war had caused or had revealed; and his fame will probably be rested upon his measures of peace as much as upon his military achievements. Necessity had called forth reform. In every department there were improvements made. Education, the better administration of the law, the completion of railways for the development of trade and strength, became subjects of consideration; and by the peaceful progress of the reign the empire was again made formidable to Europe even while she still seemed to sleep.

Foremost, both in importance and in time, among the great measures of the reign, stands the emancipa-

A.D. tion of the serfs. Since the days of Catherine II. such an act had been in contemplation: under Alexander I. there had been isolated instances of serfs made free by their lords; and even the despotic Nicholas had decreed that they should not be sold without the soil, and was even said to have recommended their general emancipation to his successor. Public feeling had slowly been prepared; and, by a
1862 decree of 1862, a class that numbered many millions, and that had been bound till now without the hope of independence to the service of their lords, was everywhere declared free, and received the privileges of purchasing the soil on which they dwelt, and of migrating from place to place as inclination prompted them. To the Russian peasant a new life was opened: the throne of the Czar was strengthened by the gratitude and the affection of his subjects: and if, in certain cases, the abandonment of toil and the intoxication of a new found independence caused a loss to the country, the transient effect seemed likely to be more than balanced by the results that would be permanent.

1863 Relying perhaps upon the liberal tendencies of the new reign, the Poles once more attempted to regain their independence. The sympathies of the Western Powers were again extended to their cause, and England, France, and Austria, joined in mediating for concessions. They mediated, however, as before, in vain. The Emperor, if averse from war, was still tenacious of his empire. The attempts at interference were rejected, and the insurrection was suppressed with the same vigour that had ever marked the action

of the Czars. The very name and language of the Poles was now prohibited; their last hopes appeared to fade, and the amalgamation of their provinces with Russia seemed destined to become complete. A.D.

A steady progress, unmarked by striking incidents, but recognized as the result of prudent policy, formed for some time the history of the reign. The sale of Russian North America to the United States in 1867 was the abandonment of a province too distant from St. Petersburg and too near to Washington, and was the foundation of a friendship with a great and rising population. In Asia the wandering tribes of the interior beheld and trembled at the increasing encroachments of Russian power. The Khans of Khokand and of Khiva, from independent potentates, were made the vassals of the Czar, and the empire of the frozen North seemed likely soon to extend to the ridge of the Himalayas. Europe, not made a sufferer as yet by force of arms, was still the unwilling spectator of Russian triumphs. Out of the questions of the age, diplomacy drew forth advantages. The war of France and Germany in 1870 gave opportunity; and the influence of the Czar, exerted to restrain the Emperor of Austria from avenging his own misfortunes, and from averting those of France, was rewarded through the silent countenance by Prussia of Russian claims. While France was humbled, and England was isolated, the declaration went forth that the Czar would no longer consider himself bound by the stipulations of 1856, which had neutralized the Black Sea, and had limited his fleet; and the obedient assent of Europe was a tribute to the

A.D. ——— diplomacy and strength of Russia. Gradually old claims and old pretexts appeared to revive. Insurrections which occurred in 1875 among the Christian subjects of the Porte were made use of to foster Russian policy. The inhabitants of Montenegro and of Servia were indirectly encouraged in their risings: the Bulgarians, with their homes destroyed and their families massacred, appeared to excite the special compassion of the Czar. Russia, it was declared, did not desire to draw forth the sword; but guarantees must be secured for the better government of the Turkish provinces, if possible by the collective voice of Europe, if not by the action of Russia herself alone.

A conference assembling at Constantinople was the endeavour on the part of Europe to gain peace and reforms. Its ill-success was the excuse for the advance of Russian troops, whose mobilization had early been begun. By the end of April, 1877, the frontier of the Pruth was crossed, and again a hostile army appeared to be on its march to Constantinople. At the same time the eastern provinces of the Turkish empire were entered, and Kars and Erzeroum were threatened. The Russian generals found, however, that they were met by a resistance that had been unexpected. The Turks fought bravely as in earlier wars, and their entrenchment and defence of Plevna gained for them a respite in Europe, while in Asia the Russian operations met with but small success. With the fall of Plevna, however, the Russian triumph was secured. The forces of the Czar passed over the Balkans, they descended upon Adrianople, and heard as they did so of the fall of Kars, in Asia. Again the Sultan, in

despair, prepared to treat for peace; and at San Stefano, outside the walls of Constantinople, he accepted terms dictated to him by Russia.

The creation of a vast principality of Bulgaria, the circumscribing of the authority of the Sultan in Europe to a mere corner round Constantinople, and the establishment of Russian influence throughout the Thracian peninsula, had been the general results accepted by Turkey. The Powers of Europe, however, could not view without alarm the preponderance that had been thus secured. England and Austria more particularly believed that they now beheld the advance of Russia to the *Ægean*, and the Czar was called on, in accordance with the Treaty of Paris, to submit the arrangements that had been made to the consideration of Europe. It was a call distasteful to the ambition and the pride of a conquering people. They were exhausted, however, by the effects of war; they were oppressed by the anticipation of debt; and they were threatened by the renewal of strife, in which two at least of the great Powers of Europe would have acted against them. The necessities of the time proved stronger even than the fortunes of Russia; and the Czar consented to the assembling of a Congress at Berlin, for the consideration of such changes as the late events might have made necessary. In that congress there was substituted a European treaty for the more private one between Russia and Turkey alone. For the appeasing of the jealousies of England and of Austria, Russia consented to the reduction of the new Bulgaria by two-thirds of its proposed extent, and agreed to the substitution for

A.D. ——— what was thus surrendered of a less independent province, which was to be known as Eastern Roumelia. She agreed, moreover, to the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria, and to the cession by a private treaty of Cyprus to England. Roumania at the same time was declared independent, and received the territory known as the Dobrudja, which lies between the Lower Danube and the Black Sea. Greece, Montenegro, and Servia, were all to receive extensions of frontier. In return Russia herself retained Ardahan, Kars, and Batoum in Asia, and received the strip of Bessarabia, of which she had been deprived by the Treaty of 1856. Her frontier was thus again extended to the Danube, and what had been felt as a national humiliation was removed. The results of the war, indeed, though less than had at first been stipulated, were great and glorious for the Empire. Again it had been shown that Constantinople had been within the Russian grasp, and had only been preserved by the jealousies of the European Powers.

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VII.

THE SWISS CONFEDERATION.

THE SWISS CONFEDERATION.



THE patriots of Switzerland, like the patricians of Venice, have traced their origin to an ancient though a humble source. Their ancestors are said to have been fugitives before the Franks; and the higher valleys of the Alps, like the islands of the Adriatic, to have been first inhabited by men who sought for freedom in obscurity. These early settlers were soon joined by others. Under the Carlovingian Emperors colonization on crown lands or by crown serfs was extended; monasteries, which had arisen along the borders of the primeval forests, pushed forward their domains; and individuals, attracted by the rewards held out to the reclaimers of the soil, united in the work of cultivation and of settlement. A population of mixed character was the result. There were ecclesiastical and secular dependencies created: but, beside these, there were also communities of men, who, owing no allegiance except to Imperial authority, became possessed of many liberties, and gradually acquired some measure of independence and even a distinct organization of their own.

A.D.



The early differences which thus existed increased

A.D. ——— with time. The royal lands were often alienated; sub-infeudations occurred; the monasteries gave over their civil and criminal authority to advocates or protectors among their secular neighbours; and the Imperial bailiffs, by long hereditary possession of their office, began to claim, and even to enjoy, something more than a mere delegated authority. But still, in the midst of the diversity of tenures and of jurisdictions which thus arose, there yet survived the liberties of many of the free communities; and these gained strength and independence every year that they continued to endure.

At the close of the tenth century, when the names of Schwytz, of Uri, and of Unterwald, had emerged into light, the condition of the three valleys was in all probability much the same. The land was everywhere divided under the same mixed tenures. The valley of Schwytz, however, appears to have been distinguished by the number of its freemen; while Uri, for the most part, was ruled by the Abbey of Zurich and its advocates; and Unterwald, the weakest and least known, was divided among jurisdictions of which none had risen to prominence.

Gradually, as principalities became formed, and powers became aggregated in the hands of the secular nobility, the extinction of many among the minor forms of government became threatened. The rise of the Dukes of Zahringen, in the 11th century, seemed likely to reduce all Upper Germany into the uniform condition of a subject province. Among their various offices, these princes had obtained the advocateship of the Abbey of Zurich, and with it the dominion over

the larger portion of the valley of Uri. This subjection however of the inhabitants, so fatal as it might seem to their liberties, proved in reality a step to their independence; for when the last of the Dukes of Zahringen expired in 1218, the Emperor Frederick II. broke up their dominions, and distributed their offices: the advocateship of the abbey was retained by himself; and the valley of Uri, after a temporary alienation to the now rising House of Hapsburg, was accorded a charter in 1231, which declared it to be immediately dependent on the Empire.

While Schwytz can boast the number of her free communities, to Uri belongs the fame of having been the first to rise into immediate connection with the 1231 Empire. The other valleys soon strove to reach what thus had been attained. During the progress of the 13th century, they saw the strife between the Empire and the Papacy, and the disastrous years which followed upon the death of Frederick II.; they saw on all sides the graspings at power in the opportunities of anarchy; they saw the Counts of Hapsburg, their now formidable neighbours, acquiring dominion by intrigue, by inheritance, and by purchase, until their rule extended from Thun into the heart of the Grisons. A powerful House was ruling in their midst, partly as independent sovereigns, partly as Imperial bailiffs. The freemen of Schwytz already feared lest their allegiance to an Imperial bailiff might be turned, during this lawless age, into subjection to a despot; and, by an offer of sympathy and of support to Frederick, at a time when the Hapsburgs stood aloof from their excommunicated sovereign, they obtained

A.D. a charter declaring them to be, like Uri, immediate
 ——— subjects of the Empire. The precedent they gained
 was an important one; but the privileges they were
 1250 promised proved illusory. The Interregnum came;
 and the family, whose power had been abridged, and
 whose schemes had perhaps been thwarted, enforced
 their old authority. A Hapsburg mounted the Imperial
 1273 throne, and the cause of the new freemen seemed
 lost. The charter of Uri alone was confirmed; that
 of Schwytz was studiously ignored; and the valley
 was again ruled as a family, not as an Imperial,
 possession.

The Emperor Rodolf I. aspired, as his ancestors
 had done, to increase his hereditary dominions. The
 opportunities which he possessed enabled him to ac-
 quire large territories in the east, and to merge the
 ancient title of Count of Hapsburg in the prouder one
 of Duke of Austria. His scattered possessions on
 the west might be made the foundation of another
 Duchy; and, for the first time, the inhabitants of
 Upper Germany perceived that it was the interest
 not merely of a neighbour but of their Emperor to
 extinguish their liberties. So imminent indeed did
 the danger seem during the reign of Rodolf, that, on
 his death in 1291, the feeling was strong against the
 continuance of the Imperial power in the hands of his
 family: and, among those that opposed the election
 of Albert of Austria to the vacant throne, none were
 more strenuous in their action than the small but
 resolute communities of the Three Valleys.

The dangers of weakness had already taught the
 need of union. There had been temporary leagues

among the various Powers of Upper Germany, and in one at least of these the Forest States, as the Three Valleys were now called, had already shared. But there was now attempted something more than had yet been tried, an alliance which was to prove the foundation-stone of the Swiss Confederacy. By a Pact, concluded between the leading men of Uri, 1291 Schwytz, and Unterwald, in 1291, the Three Valleys bound themselves in an alliance, which was to be not temporary only but perpetual. They regarded the dangers of the time, the disposition of many to encroach on their liberties; and they declared their intention to defend intact the privileges that they already had acquired. Each Valley had now its Landamman, its seal, and its distinct organization; and the measure of independence, which had been slowly gained, was not now to be lightly surrendered before the ambition of a foreign master.

For some years the alternate succession on the Imperial throne of princes whose interests were generally opposed to those of the House of Austria was in favour of the young Confederacy. Adolf of Nassau renewed the charters of Schwytz and Uri in 1297; Henry VII. confirmed them in 1309; and included Unterwald, for the first time, in the concession of privileges. These recognitions, and the undoubted fact that the Three Valleys were now united, and were already becoming regarded as a single Confederated State, increased their strength and their importance. But the princes of the House of Austria did not neglect, as opportunity arose, to assert their authority, and to undo, so far as it was possible, the progress that was

A.D. being made to their own prejudice. When in possession
 ——— of the Imperial throne they enforced their claims,
 when deprived of it they protested against their
 non-recognition. Albert I., who succeeded to Adolf
 1298 of Nassau, ruled over Schwytz and Unterwald as
 his father had done, with sternness, though not with
 tyranny; and Frederick III., elected Emperor in
 1314 1314, in opposition to Louis of Bavaria, aspired to the
 exercise of the same authority. The moment, however,
 was now fast approaching when the alliance which
 had been maturing throughout the continuance of
 five and twenty years was to bear its fruit. There
 was no sudden violence, perhaps, no sudden outburst;
 there was no Gessler, and there was no Tell; but in-
 creasing encroachments and increasing fear provoked
 murmurings; the free population of the Valleys was
 dissatisfied; and when a force appeared, which was
 to coerce them into tranquillity and overawe their
 neighbours, they took courage to go forth against
 their enemy, and won upon the hill-side of Morgarten
 their first victory as a people.

1315 The battle, that gave its baptism of blood to the
 young Confederacy, demands more than a mere passing
 notice. Ten thousand Austrians, under Leopold, the
 brother of the Emperor Frederick III., were met by
 a force of thirteen hundred men, the whole strength
 apparently of the Confederate population. A position
 upon the hill-side, by which the Austrians climbed,
 gave an advantage to the Confederates. They loosened
 rocks and stones upon their enemies; and they charged
 upon them while exhausted by the ascent and con-
 founded by the unexpected missiles. A multitude

were driven into the waters of the little lake of Egeri below ; others were scattered among the dangerous ravines of the mountains. Not less than fifteen hundred are said to have perished upon the field ; while of the Swiss but sixteen died. The Archduke Leopold himself escaped with difficulty ; and arrived at Winterthur, having lost the flower of his army, and with death, as the old chronicler says, in his own soul.

The Confederates had fought for the first time as a people, and had given the world assurance of the reality and strength of their alliance. They now renewed the covenant to which they owed their deliverance. By the Pact of Brunnen, concluded in 1315, they bound themselves anew to defend in common their individual rights ; and this time not merely the leaders but the people appear to have joined in giving sanction to the alliance. The Emperor Louis of Bavaria, as hostile to the House of Austria as themselves, gave formal recognition to the Confederacy, and even declared that those portions of the Valleys that were justly Austrian were now to be deemed independent. Yet were the peasants not unduly elated by their success. They did not attempt to push further their advantages. They declared their determination to respect the just rights of Austria. Their alliance was one not for aggression but for defence. And when Duke Leopold perceived that they meditated no attack, he became willing to accord a truce, which relieved them from the apprehensions of war, though it could not extinguish hatreds.

The close of the 13th century had seen the birth of the Confederacy ; the progress of the 14th beheld it

A.D. stretching forth its arms towards manhood. It had arisen in the midst of a society that was weak and divided, that was exposed to the dangers of private wars, and above all to the ambition of the House of Austria; it had had a success which had been the astonishment of its neighbours; and it now maintained an independence which, for the time at least, was uncontested. Others, who thought their liberties in peril, now sought the alliance of the hardy peasants. The Confederacy was thus gradually extended; and the Three Valleys, who had at first only contemplated the assurance of their own safety, began now to assume the responsibility of the defence of others. Not forty years had passed after the victory at Morgarten before the list of the Eight Ancient Cantons was completed. The Forest States became the allies of cities whose importance was reflected upon themselves; and, in return for the assistance of their arms, they acquired a countenance and a support, without which they must have proved too feeble to resist the encroaching tendencies of succeeding ages.

1332 Luzern was first among their neighbours to ask for a Perpetual Alliance. The town had passed by compact under Austrian rule; but the privileges for which it had bargained had received no respect; and in 1332 it applied for protection. The Three Valleys accepted the proposition. The town was near; the interests of the population were not unlike their own; and they agreed to bind it closely to themselves and make their union henceforth to consist of Four instead of as hitherto Three Forest States. A space of nineteen years however elapses before the Confederacy,

thus enlarged, becomes still further extended. During this space the Forest States made leagues, as did their neighbours, for temporary needs ; but no new alliance for perpetuity was undertaken. They allied with Bern, in pride and wealth the chief among their neighbours, and won new glory upon the field of Laupen, where they shared in the repulse of a coalition of 1339 princes and of nobles, whose success might have endangered the liberties of all Upper Germany. Yet the alliance which they renewed after the victory was even then but temporary. It needed the lapse of further time to show of how great development the Confederacy was capable.

The request of Zurich in 1351 for a Perpetual 1351 Alliance became the occasion of its most important extension. Again the fear of Austria was predominant. A democratic party had arisen to power within the town ; and the boldness of their actions had endangered its liberty. Zurich was rich and populous ; it was a free city of the Empire, and important from its position upon the great high-road of commerce between Germany and the South ; it had interests and relations differing often from those of the Forest population ; but its alliance would secure to them a rich market for their produce, a bulwark for their defence, and increased respect among their neighbours. It was admitted therefore to their League. The contracting parties bound themselves to mutual defence. But the closeness of alliance, which had hitherto distinguished the Confederates, could not now be insisted on ; and for the first time, the conclusion of separate alliances by either party, when not to the other's detriment, was

A.D. permitted. If the strict unity of action, intended by
— the earlier confederates, was thus abandoned, the loss
perhaps was more than compensated by the wider
alliances which were now made practicable.

1352 The admission of Zurich was followed by that of
Glaris and of Zug. Determined to check the progress
of his enemies, the Duke of Austria had resolved to
crush at once the independence of a town which had
now imparted her own strength to the Confederates.
In the event of war with Zurich the position of Glaris
and of Zug would make them important. But the
pride of Austria disdained to make an effort to secure
their possession; and the one attracted by a natural
sympathy, the other overawed by a threatening force,
were drawn into alliance with the Confederates.
Their circumstances however did not allow them to
aspire to the same terms as Zurich. There was less of
reciprocity and more of submission in their alliance.
And for the first time a spirit of domination may be
traced among the older Confederates.

The result of these leagues was a defeat of the
designs of Austria. The Archduke Albert abandoned
his plans. The new Confederates accepted peace, upon
terms which recognized their alliance; and the accession
1353 of Bern to their number, almost immediately after-
wards, completed the list of the Eight Ancient Cantons.
The great city, which now united with its neighbours,
had been compelled by its alliance with Austria to
take part in the preparations against Zurich; but it
had both the remembrance and the hope of aid from
the Forest States; and when these, in order to secure
themselves against such an enemy in future wars, made

offers of perpetual alliance, the proposition was readily accepted. A league, not very different from that with Zurich, was concluded ; and the alliance of the proudest and richest city of the neighbourhood shed new lustre upon the rising Confederation.

The Swiss Confederation, as it may now be called, had reached the form which it was destined to retain for more than a hundred years. The Forest States had now become surrounded by perpetual allies, to each of whom they were united by ties of greater or less stringency. These allies had not accepted duties towards each other : but, through their alliance with the Forest States, the central pivot of the Confederation, an indirect connection had been formed, which became the basis of those closer leagues which afterwards united the various Cantons to one another. In all of the alliances the strict sense of justice is to be marked. The rights of feudal lords, and even of the House of Austria, are always reserved. It was no revolutionary or rebellious spirit that had prompted their formation. It was *merely* that the rights of the threatened populations might secure that respect which they themselves were ready to accord to the rights of others.

The Dukes of Austria, however, whose schemes were being thwarted, and who foresaw that the alliances which were now made for defence might be turned hereafter to purposes of aggression, could not behold the Swiss alliances without indignation. They continually attempted to procure their dissolution ; and made war at one time, and overtures at another, with the view of detaching Zurich, the least steadfast member, from the Confederation. The Emperor Charles

A.D. IV., was himself persuaded to bear a part in an attack
1354 on the city, upon the plea that no leagues were valid without the Imperial sanction. But the rejection of such a doctrine by other members of the Empire prevailed at length; and the Duke of Austria was left to fight alone against his enemy. When this attack had failed, the chief citizens of Zurich were persuaded to accept a treaty which was at least inconsistent with the paramount duties of the city towards its Confederates. And though all such intention was disavowed, yet the truce, which was
1358 eventually accepted by all parties, left the town in the doubtful position of an ally of Austria as well as of the Forest States.

This truce, which became known as that of Thorberg, from the name of its mediator, gave peace to
1358-86 Switzerland for eight and twenty years, during which the history of the Confederation is that of gradual progress unmarked by any striking incident. Each member of the Confederation now added, as it was able, to its strength. Bern, more particularly, increased her power. By conquest, by the purchase of Imperial rights, by the acquisition in divers manners of neighbouring domains, the members of the league already were beginning to rise to the position of feudal lords, and were surrounding themselves by dependencies which formed a barrier against their enemies. The times were favourable to these extensions. The Emperors Charles IV. and Wenceslaus, less careful for their Imperial than for their Bohemian interests, were ready to barter their authority; the weaker nobility had been crushed by the rise of the

Houses of Austria and Savoy; and the example of the Forest States had stimulated the desire of independence among their neighbours. At the same time the commercial prosperity of the country increased; and Zurich became famed for her manufactures. Twice, indeed, during this period was the Confederation threatened by war. Once, the Free Companies let loose from France, and once the claims of Ingelram de Coucy, the son-in-law of King Edward III. of England, against the House of Austria, brought bands of hostile adventurers to its doors; and so imminent did the danger seem that Bern, Zurich, and Luzern allied with Austria herself against the common enemy. But these dangers passed; and the general progress of the individual Cantons was continued.

This progress, however, soon aroused the enmity of others besides the House of Austria. The lesser barons now perceived that the power which still remained to them was threatened. They had used it often with intolerance, and they now found, like the Dukes of Austria, that their oppression drove their vassals to seek help under the protection of the Confederates. Complaints were made as to the reception of such new allies. Luzern had entered into treaty with the inhabitants of the Entlibuch; she had even promised her protection to the little Austrian town of Sempach. Long smouldering hostility at length burst forth in war. No fewer than 167 of the neighbouring barons united to defy the Confederates. Duke Leopold of Austria was at their head. The supporters of rebellion were now to be chastised as rebels. Luzern particularly was singled out for punishment. In their need the

A.D.

1365

1375

1386

A.D. Confederates united their forces. Bern alone, upon
— the plea of a truce yet unexpired with Austria, shared
neither in the danger nor the glory of the coming
struggle. The rest marched boldly forward to defend
their independence, and at Sempach met their enemies
advancing upon Luzern.

1386 Drawn up upon the side of a hill the Swiss awaited
their antagonists. Their numbers were but small,
their enemies were many; their armour, rude and
hasty, contrasted strangely with the equipments of
their adversaries. As they engaged, a line of pikes
and shields pressed on them, impenetrable, advancing
like a wall of steel. Borne down beneath the attack
the foremost ranks gave way. The rear, becoming
foremost in its turn, seemed likely but for a moment
to stem the opposing tide. Already the honours of
the day were being grasped by the enemies of the
Confederation. In this supremest moment, however,
the devotion of one man was found to equal the old
heroism of Rome, and by the sacrifice of his one life to
restore the fortunes of his country. Seizing within
his arms the pikes of all whom he could reach, he
grasped them to his heart, and with the words, "Here
lies the way, remember my children," he buried the
sheaf within his breast, and opened the gate of victory
to his companions. The name of Arnold von Winkel-
ried of Unterwald stands foremost among the patriots
of his country. The fortunes of the day were turned
by his example. The Swiss poured through the gap
which his self-sacrifice had made for them. The
Austrians in their turn were now confounded and
driven back. More than 600 nobles perished in the

slaughter of the day ; and Leopold of Austria himself, contending bravely to the last, was left under a heap of undistinguished slain. The victory of Sempach has not perhaps the fame which belongs to Morgarten, the earlier and more striking triumph of the Confederation ; but it was a battle upon a greater scale ; it ended not merely in a rout, but in a most disastrous defeat, and it gave a lasting confirmation to that independence of which Morgarten had only justified the hope.

But the war was not ended ; for the young heir of Austria and others took up the struggle. Its character, however, became predatory ; and, with the exception of another defeat of Austrian troops at Nafels, by the 1388 men of Glaris, there is little to call for notice. In 1389 a truce was signed, which became the virtual 1389 abandonment by Austria of all her pretensions. She confirmed the Swiss in the possession of their conquests ; and though this was nominally only for seven years, yet the increasing weakness of the Austrian power, and the consequent renewal, first for twenty, and then for fifty years, of the same truce, caused the abandonment to become final. Within a century from the first struggle after freedom, the independence of the Confederation had become virtually assured.

The Pact of Brunnen in 1315 had established the Confederacy. In 1370 a remarkable decree, which became known as the Pfaffenbrief, had restricted and regulated the claims of ecclesiastics. In 1393 a Covenant was signed for the regulation of affairs of war. And the three decrees became thenceforth regarded as the fundamental laws of the Confederacy.

A.D.

— The States had become aware of influences which tended to the disorganization of their alliance. The separate leagues which divers members might conclude, the disposition of Zurich more especially, as shown both before and since the war, to ally with Austria, had called for the re-assertion of the paramount duties of each confederate to the others. The stern principles of earlier days were already becoming relaxed ; and on the field of victory men had preferred to plunder rather than to pursue. The Treaty of Sempach, now concluded, was the protest against such frailties. It bound anew the Confederates to each other ; it reiterated the paramount nature of their obligations mutually undertaken ; and ordered war henceforth to be conducted upon principles of Spartan justice and self-abnegation. With this Act concludes the history of a century. Later years might spread the fame of Swiss valour more widely than it had yet been borne ; no age was to surpass in purity and honour the first century of the Confederation's existence.

The annals of the country show now indeed their happiest page. Men simple and true have nobly fought for freedom, and have gloriously achieved its possession. Their towns and trade are prosperous. Their territory is extending, often by purchase, often by the adoption of eager citizens into their ranks. Their neighbours seek alliance ; some only for temporary needs, but some for perpetuity, so as to gain, if possible, the advantages of Cantons, though exclusiveness may still deny to them the name. New leagues now rise to imitate the old. The lake cities about Constance join together ; and attempts at union

are repeated in the Grisons. The country of Appenzell rises up against the oppression of its lord, and in a memorable struggle gloriously achieves an independence. Later, by treaties of alliance, the new freedmen are united with the Confederates; and steps are thus continuously made towards the extension of the influence and power of the Swiss Confederacy.

It was not enough, however, that a peaceful progress should continue. Glory indeed had been already won; but ambition now prompted conquest; and dominion, instead of liberty, was about to become the object of the Swiss. We enter now upon a period of aggrandizement, when the Confederation, no longer on her own defence, began to assert her strength, to enlarge her borders, and to extend her fame over the breadth of Europe. The 15th century indeed is not the age of honour, but it is at least that of valour. It is the age which established Switzerland as a military power in Europe, and gave the permanence, however achieved, to those results of early patriotism which without it might indeed have secured respect but not endurance. During this age the Confederacy extended itself upon the north and south to the same limits that still bound it in the present day. The last conquests from the House of Austria were won, the last claims of Imperial supremacy were defeated. Before Swiss armies the mightiest power of the age was shattered, and French invasion driven back from Italy. Kingdoms competed for their aid, and vied in honouring their valour. The rude dwellers among lakes and mountains became the admiration of courts; and it is in the intoxication of their rise to wealth and power

A.D. that must be sought the excuse for the grasping spirit,
—— the venality, and the excesses, which have soiled the
white robe of the young Confederation.

1415 The earliest conquest was that of Aargau and Baden from Frederick Duke of Austria. The Confederation was at peace with him; and honour should have preserved the truce that had been sworn to not three years before. But Frederick was weak and humbled. He had espoused the cause of John XXII., whom the Council of Constance had condemned, and he was excommunicated: he had evaded paying homage for his dominions to the Emperor Sigismund, and he had fallen under the ban of the Empire. His enemies called loudly upon the Swiss to share in his spoliation; and, with the noble exception of Uri, they obeyed the call. Bern first, and then the others, followed in a race for spoil. And Frederick, unable to defend his provinces, beheld them confirmed by Sigismund to the Swiss. The importance of the acquisitions is not measured by their richness only or by their extent. It lies in the fact that a new element was thus introduced into the Confederation. Individual States had before this conquered for themselves, and had added to their separate possessions; but now the conquered districts had been seized by common action, and were held as common spoil; no voice was raised to ask for their admission to federal rights; they were ruled henceforth as subject provinces, each State in turn becoming governor of the common soil, and perpetuating with little change the features of the Austrian government.

• The first of the subject bailiwicks, which were to

form hereafter so large a portion of the Swiss territory, was thus constituted. Upon the south a similar extension of Swiss power was already being foreshadowed. The Italian valleys had begun to dread the arms of the Confederates. The passage of the St. Gothard, from the earliest times, had been the highroad to the south. The House of Hapsburg had seen in it the gateway of ambition, the earlier Confederates the source of their supplies. As early as 1331, the mountaineers of Uri had descended and annexed the southern slope as far as Faido. In 1403, upon some herdsmen's quarrels, the lower valley had been conquered: and, soon after, the other Cantons, penetrating through the Valais, had made themselves masters of Domo d'Ossola. Repeated struggles for what had thus been won occurred during the early years of the 15th century. Domo was often lost and recovered. At one time the Confederates, by purchase, had extended their authority over Bellinzona, and even as far as the Lake Maggiore. It was not possible, however, for them as yet to hold permanently what had been won. The great Italian condottiere, Carmagnola, was engaged upon the side of Milan. At Arbedo, in 1422, the Swiss experienced a defeat, the 1422 most serious that they yet had known; and though they boldly strove, and with some success, to retrieve their disaster, yet a peace, the fruit of weakness and 1427 of internal dissensions, had to be signed in 1427, and every acquisition upon the south was relinquished. But though the possession of the Italian conquests was thus lost, the hope of regaining them was not abandoned; and the desire of becoming masters of the

A.D. southern valleys of the Alps received a new impulse
— from the fact of having momentarily grasped them.

Wars that brought little glory to the Confederacy were prolonged into the century. With the sense of danger it seemed as though the sense of the necessity of union had passed. The spirit of aggression had already appeared, that of discord was soon to follow. For the first time the Confederacy was torn by the rage of civil war. The inheritance of the last of the Counts of Toggenburg was in dispute; his many provinces were falling asunder; and the act of Zurich, in supporting the inhabitants of Sargans against a lord who was the friend and freeman of Schwytz, was viewed as a violation of the duties of one Confederate to another. Recriminations became multiplied; ill feeling rapidly developed. The cause of Schwytz was supported by the other States, who could not but contrast its steadfast adherence to the principles of the Confederation with the too often doubtful conduct of its opponent; and a war broke out which in bitterness exceeded all that had preceded it. The result, indeed, was the submission of Zurich; but animosities were not extinguished; and it only needed the recurrence of a more favourable opportunity to fan them again into a flame.

That opportunity soon came. Frederick III. of
1440 Austria had recently succeeded to the Imperial throne. The disasters of his ancestors were keenly present to him; and the recovery of Aargau, their most recent loss, became the object of his ambition. Zurich, still
1442 full of anger against her confederate, agreed to ally with her old enemy; and for the first time the peacock

plumes, the hated badge of Austria, were seen upon the breast of Swiss citizens. Dissimulation delayed but could not avert war; and again the other Cantons rose in arms against their traitorous Confederate. 1443 More bitter and more bloody than the former strife, the contest stands a melancholy record in Swiss history. Men fought with a ferocity that spoke more for their unflinching hearts than for their nobler virtues. The dead body of Stüssi, the burgomaster of Zurich, is said to have been torn in pieces by the teeth of his enemies. Of the garrison of Greiffensee, which surrendered to the Confederates, only ten, on account of their youth or age, were spared; sixty-two heads falling in succession to the headsman's stroke. The strife waxed only the more bitter. Austria did not afford to Zurich the aid which had been hoped; she persuaded France, however, to bear her part. That kingdom, desolated by the Armagnacs, was willing to seek peace at home through the outlet of a foreign war. The Dauphin, to be known in later times as Louis XI., arrived in Switzerland at the head of 1444 30,000 men. Near Basle he met with a Confederate force of 1500; and an action, from its obstinacy the most memorable of the war, took place near the chapel of St. Jacob. The Swiss had come in ignorance, but in honour they could not retreat; and fighting with the courage of a noble pride and of despair they fell. Prodiges of valour were said to have been performed. Men tore from their own wounds the arrows which they lanced against the foe, and threw themselves all maimed, but with fresh vigour, upon the advancing line. Ten only left the field to live disgraced among

A.D. their countrymen; the rest had found an honourable
grave: and the defeat, which took its name from the
chapel, had in reality achieved a victory, since the
Dauphin, after what he had beheld, determined to
conclude a peace with the Confederates.

1450 The general reconciliation, however, of the Cantons
within themselves was delayed till 1450; when both
sides, exhausted by the struggle, agreed to peace.
Zurich had found that her reliance on Austria was
misplaced, and that she was unable to stand alone.
She was content, therefore, to recover her lost terri-
tories, and to take her place once more among her
old Confederates. New strength indeed had come from
weakness. More firmly united, more respected abroad,
the Cantons added daily to their alliances. Free cities,
ecclesiastical and temporal lords, were pressing forward
to obtain the security and the honour of perpetual
alliance or of citizenship. The abbot of St. Gall and
the bishop of Constance, both princes of the Empire,
the great cities of Strasburg and Mulhausen, were
among the number. Foreign nations courted the
rising State; and in the treaties with France and
Savoy, Burgundy and Milan, are found the sure proofs
of an increasing importance. At the same time the
last conquests that were to be made were won from
Austria. Duke Sigismund, like his ancestor, had
incurred the ban of Pope and Emperor. He was
despoiled of Thurgau, which was occupied by the
1461 Swiss: and though, by a treaty of 1461, their
possession of it was only recognized as temporary, yet
succeeding events occurred which caused it to be
permanent.

The policy of the age was tortuous; and great interests now combined to effect the confederacy. It was the age of Charles the Bold, and of Louis the XI. The power of Burgundy had become formidable to Europe; and the Swiss were now made the Nemesis attendant upon prosperity.

Duke Sigismund of Austria, despoiled of part of his dominions, and fearing for the rest, had chosen 1469 in 1469 to pledge his still remaining possessions upon the Rhine to Charles the Bold, as to a powerful protector. His fear of Burgundy, however, and the promptings of the crafty enemy of Burgundy, King Louis XI., impelled him soon to repent of what he had done, and to turn for assistance in their recovery to the very Swiss whom he had so lately dreaded. A Convention was signed which became known as the Hereditary Pact between Austria and the Confederation. The long strife which had been begun at Morgarten was ended; the full possession of all the Austrian lands that the Swiss occupied was secured to them: and in return they agreed to give assistance to Sigismund in the recovery of his Rhenish possessions.

Many causes now contributed to hasten war. The King of France, in eagerness for his great adversary's discomfiture, urged on the Swiss. He offered gold to their great men, and subsidies to their governments; and the first precedent for the fatal system of pensions and of bribes was thus given. The Emperor, himself distrustful of the Duke of Burgundy, and sympathising with his kinsman, reminded the Swiss of their allegiance to the Empire, and invited them to act. A revolt had occurred in the Rhenish provinces

A.D. — themselves, not yet accustomed to the rule of Burgundy, and outraged by the crimes of a Burgundian governor. While Charles attempted to reassert the authority which he refused as yet to relinquish, the Swiss prepared to aid the revolters. They had accepted the position of allies in a great combination; and their troops advanced with boldness against the common enemy.

1474 The autumn of 1474 saw the invasion of Franche Comté, and a victory over the Burgundians before the walls of Héricourt. In the spring of 1475 the allies of Burgundy were made to suffer. The Pays de Vaud, connected with Charles by the sympathies of its possessors, and important from giving access to the passes of Savoy, was entered upon little pretext. The Canton of Bern was foremost for the attack; and, together with Freyburg, whom it associated with itself, obtained the greatest advantages. The conquest of towns and castles followed; and the names of Grandson and Morat, Orbe and Estavayer, may be distinguished among the number. The great city of Geneva paid a contribution to avoid attack; the city of Lausanne submitted to recognize the Confederates as its lords. At the same time the Valais was annexed; and a fatal blow was thus given to the dominion of the house of Savoy upon the north side of the Alps. The Swiss were not always merciful in their triumphs; and the "bad days" that occurred disgraced the Confederacy, and were the excuse for future retaliation. Duke Charles could not as yet defend his own provinces or those of his allies. He was engaged in the conquest of Lorraine, and he delayed the day of his retribution.

He came, however, in 1476, the conqueror of cities and of kings, with a pomp and following such as no other sovereign would have boasted. He came, till now himself unconquered, to measure strength with a Confederacy itself unconquerable. All Europe waited with anxiety upon the strife. Before Grandson the great Duke paused. He compelled its surrender; and hung remorselessly, as the Swiss themselves had hung, each man that had resisted. The Cantons were stirred within them as they heard the tidings. Quickly an army gathered; and before the very town they had so lately taken the Burgundians were challenged to the fight.

The Swiss, as in their earliest days, were now engaging in a contest against a host superior to their own. The stern valour of their early days, however, was still present; and a nation that never counted upon victory till won now met an army presumptuous and confident of its success. Steadfast, the Swiss ranks received their enemy: the line of their long pikes remained unbroken by the charge of cavalry. The order of attack was changed, and in the change the troops of Burgundy were lost. As the front line wheeled, there came a panic upon those behind; they saw their own men, as they thought, yielding. At the same time the men of Uri and Luzern, whose march had been delayed, were seen upon their flank. The mighty host, abandoning itself to terror, fled. All the spoil of a luxurious court, all the wealth of an army satiated with conquests and with plunder, was left to the mercy of the Swiss; and, if the loss of life to the fugitives was small, the loss of fame was

A.D. inestimable. Foreign nations gave again the tribute
— of their admiration to the Confederates, who, con-
scious of their achievements, dared to hold high
1476 language even before Louis XI.

A second triumph followed speedily upon the first ; for though the troops of Charles had been dispirited he was determined to conquer in the war. Retiring to Lausanne, he there collected a new host, and within four months was at the gates of Morat, the fall of which would have opened to him Savoy. The Swiss army which marched to its relief was about the same in strength as that of Burgundy ; it was the largest that had yet been raised, and numbered 35,000 men. The Duke drew up his forces to receive the enemy. His strength lay in his position behind a ditch and hedge, and in a force of English archers to the number of 6,000. As the Swiss ended their prayer before the battle, the sun burst forth upon them ; and, hailing the omen as a sign of victory, they charged against the enemy. Their impulse carried them across the hedge and ditch ; and the fight was waged with desperation on both sides. This was indeed a battle, not a rout. But the fall of the English leader became the turning moment of the day. The dismay of his archers communicated itself to the Burgundians ; and again the Swiss were masters of the field.

The Burgundian troops had not only been routed, they had also been defeated. The whole glory rested with the Swiss ; for of the allies, in whose cause they had engaged, not one had aided in the war. Duke Sigismund, most interested of all, had failed to send a man. The Emperor, allured by the attractions of

Mary of Burgundy and of her dower, had even made peace with Charles; and Louis XI., too cautious to commit himself by action in the field, had confined his support to promises and bribes. Duke Charles, defeated and disgraced, now ceased to seek for battle with the Confederates. His enemies were rising round him. The Duchy of Lorraine was being gradually reconquered by Duke René, its despoiled possessor; and the remaining strength of Burgundy was required for the defence of its home possessions.

Nancy, the capital of Lorraine, was now besieged by Charles. Its sovereign, René, appeared before the Confederacy. He pleaded as a suppliant for aid. The Swiss had known the excitements and the triumphs of war; and the temptation of pursuing them at a safe distance from their own frontier was great. But the aid which the Cantons now accorded was of a different character from that which they had hitherto given. They refused to intervene as States. They merely allowed enlistments at the expense of the suppliant. A Swiss army was thus collected, whose valour was again to reflect fresh glory upon the Confederacy; but the influx of gold had already done its work; and it was a mercenary army that now for the first time issued from among the Cantons.

The crowning triumph of the war was thus in a measure obscured. The record, however, would be but imperfect were it not here noticed. Eight thousand Swiss appeared before the capital of Lorraine. The Duke of Burgundy was challenged to fight or to surrender the prize that had almost seemed within his grasp. He fell. The fortunes of the day, the death 1477

A.D. — of the great Duke himself, were ascribed to the Swiss ; and the survivors, returning to their country, bore to it the fame of another victory astonishing to Europe. The triple triumph of Grandson, of Morat, and of Nancy, had been such as no age perhaps or people had yet boasted.

The Burgundian wars had brought fame, and the wealth that pay and plunder could give. Upon the field of Grandson, gold had been poured out by hatfuls ; and in the division many poor had found themselves made rich. The war had brought also annexations of territory ; for of the conquests in the Pays de Vaud many had been confirmed to Bern and Freyburg ; and the Confederacy had thus added to the number of its subject bailiwicks. But prosperity was now followed by the intoxication of success ; and envy and crime attended exaltation. Demoralization spread like a flame. Robberies became so frequent that it was necessary to declare them a capital offence ; and 1500 executions followed within a few months. The successes, which had now begun, were in a few years to be sufficient to change the character of a people, to make them covet the gold of foreign nations rather than the glory of their own, and to bring in luxury and licence, until the name of Swiss could suggest only the hired mercenaries and not the patriots, while one at least of their excesses, that of drink, had passed into a proverb in Europe. The political as well as the moral framework of society was at the same time relaxed. The old objects had been attained, and new ones were now introduced. Each man, each State, began to seek the individual rather than the general

gain ; and interests became first different, then separate. Parties arose ; and while some were for Imperial, others for French alliances, the old Forest States, less able and less willing to profit by foreign enterprise, renewed their complaints against their younger and more active confederates.

The admission of Soleure and Freyburg to the Con- 1481
federacy became one of the subjects of dissension. Long since allies, and even sharers in the Federal Diets, it was now proposed to add them to the League, which for 130 years had included only the Eight Ancient Cantons. The Forest States, however, regarded with distrust the preponderance of an urban element within the Confederation ; and it is said to have been only through the mild influence of a holy hermit, Nicolas von der Fluh, that discord was averted. “ You cities,” said the preacher, “ relinquish all your separate leagues ; you rural cantons, forget not the services of the cities. Join all of you in one great Union ; and let truth and trust be its foundation and its support.” The advice was in a measure followed. Soleure and Freyburg were accepted as Confederates ; but experience as well as exhortation suggested the condition that the new Cantons should be restrained in their alliances, and should enter into such only as the general voice of the Confederation might approve.

The Diet of Stanz, at which these admissions were 1481
sanctioned, became further famous for its re-enactment of the Covenant of Sempach, and of the earlier Pfaffenbrief. The old ties were thus explicitly reasserted ; and, if the autonomy of each Canton was recognized, their federation also was distinctly asserted. Later

A.D. ——— generations were to be called on to recite the decrees which now set forth the foundations of the Confederacy; and the remembrance of the Diet, at which this had been enacted, was thus perpetuated. Wisely the Cantons acted in the suppression of their differences. They were entering upon an age, in which, more than in any previous one, the independence of smaller Powers was threatened. Everywhere the fusion of provinces into kingdoms was being accomplished. France was about to absorb the last of her great fiefs. Germany, under Maximilian, was to attempt a unity which in its design was even to include the Confederation. The Cantons were gathering up their strength; they were preparing for themselves an enduring independence in the midst of the fall and disappearance of other Powers.

From Germany their danger came. They had striven in the first instance to become immediately dependent on the Empire; and Imperial subjects they still legally remained. The Emperor was still in all official acts their Lord. Swiss deputies escorted him to Rome; and Swiss ambassadors solicited at his accession the confirmation of their privileges. But these were forms only that were thus preserved. The material ties had been gradually abandoned. Under Louis of Bavaria the power of the Imperial bailiffs had disappeared; while Charles IV., and Wenceslaus, more occupied with Bohemia than with Switzerland, and in want of money, had sold the sanction to alliances and the right of justice without appeal. Other claims, that had not thus been parted with, had gradually become obsolete; so that the Confederacy had long been

virtually free. But with the reorganization of the Empire under Maximilian the old claims had either to be enforced or their unreality to be acknowledged; and, pride forbidding the confession of weakness, the Emperor proceeded to include the Cantons in the Imperial Circles of justice, and called upon them for a contribution to the tax which was to be levied against the enemies of the Empire. Pride now met pride; and the Swiss spoke boldly in reply. They would neither pay taxes nor seek justice in the way the Emperor required. Their land should be invaded, then, rejoined Maximilian. And the answer of the stout burgomaster of Zurich deserves to be recorded, "I could hardly recommend this to your Majesty; our people are but rough, and would show no favour."

But the strife began. The Empire and the Swiss ¹⁴⁹⁹ were now in antagonism: and the Swabian League, a confederation of cities, which had been formed under the Imperial auspices, and which viewed the Cantons with a hostile jealousy, took up the quarrel, and gave its name to the war. In the temper of men's minds, there were not wanting causes of offence. A frontier outrage in the Grisons was the signal for war. The Confederation took up the cause of its allies; and a strife ensued, which, though but short, was of the most desolating character. Within six months there are said to have perished more than 20,000 men; while 2000 towns and castles were laid in ruins. There are not the striking incidents to record which arrest the attention of a reader. There were successive engagements, however, which added

A.D. to the reputation of the Swiss; and their triumphs
 ——— finally were crowned by a victory over the Imperialists
 at Dornach. By this victory the Swiss achieved for
 ever the freedom of their country. Famine, desolation,
 and defeat had made peace a necessity; and the long
 struggle, now two centuries old, was at last ended.
 Never again was the Confederacy to be called on to
 contend against the Empire for violated rights or
 threatened independence. The treaty which was now
 1499 signed at Basle retracted all demands upon them.
 Their allegiance to the Empire was still recognized;
 the form of requesting the confirmation of their
 privileges was retained; the obligation of accompany-
 ing the Emperor to Rome, and of not bearing arms
 against him, was continued. But the Swiss were free
 thenceforward from all material burdens; and were
 practically, if not in name, independent.

And, as their strength was recognized, it increased.
 1501 Basle and Schaffhausen, the former from its trade and
 wealth a most important acquisition, were added to
 the Confederacy upon the same terms as Freyburg and
 Soleure. They were towns exposed by their position
 to the hostility of the Swabian nobles, and they sought
 in a closer alliance with the confederates their safety
 from oppression.

The fame of the Swiss Cantons was almost at its
 height. The might of Burgundy had fallen, that of
 the Empire had given way, before them. They had
 secured the respect, and they now became the objects
 of the flattery, of neighbouring sovereigns. Their
 soldiery, renowned in Europe, was the coveted
 possession of foreign princes, who sought by its aid to

gratify the schemes of their ambition. Themselves were eager for the rewards of war; and the conclusion of peace between the Empire and the Confederacy was followed by a period in which the eager rush for foreign service depopulated the country and sent thousands to perish in the cause of strangers. This period indeed swelled high the military fame of Switzerland. The plains of Lombardy were conquered and bestowed; the remotest provinces of Italy were made to tremble at, or to applaud, Swiss victories. It is a period, however, that is not honourable to Swiss morality. Corruption rapidly prevailed. Great men submitted to become the pensionaries of foreign states; the populace flocked forth to fight for pay and plunder, not for honour or for independence. Gold, which had been first poured forth at Grandson, which the nation had now learnt to love, became the guiding motive in the politics of the rulers, in the conquests of the people. With gold, the desire for gold was spread; and, with the thirst for it, the crimes of robbery and murder, not only abroad, but at home, again increased. Armed bands paraded the country, extorting money from the towns that would escape their ravages. Even the governments were not exempt from the infection of the times; the Cantons of Bern and Freyburg adopted a forged will, and exacted under it a sum of over 700,000 crowns from the Duke of Savoy.

The Confederates had won their independence, they had aggrandized their dominions; the great objects for their united action had been attained; and their foreign wars have henceforth a new character. They cease, from this time forward, to fight for themselves;

A.D. — they expend their strength, but it is in the cause of others, for the rewards of pay, and not for those of patriotism. It might well be deemed that the history of campaigns, in which they served no longer as principals, but as mere mercenaries, might lightly be passed over, as belonging less to the records of the Swiss people than to those of the Powers for whom they fought. But the magnitude of the operations that were now undertaken, the surpassing valour that was displayed, and the widespread fame that attended the Swiss arms, makes it essential to pause for a time at least upon some of the earlier scenes of their foreign service.

From their first days the Swiss had wandered after war. They are found, as early as 1253, engaged under the Abbot of St. Gall against the Bishop of Constance ; and they took part in the siege of Besançon under the Emperor Rodolf in 1289. As time advanced, the distinctly mercenary character of their service became more apparent. On the shores of the Baltic against the Pagans, in Bohemia against the Hussites, in France during the war of Public Good, as well as in the nearer territories of the Palatinate and of Savoy, their arms were felt. In 1439, Soleure had been obliged to forbid enrolments, so great had been the demand for men whom natural hardihood, firm discipline, and constant practice had made formidable. As Dauphin, Louis XI. had recognized the valour of the Swiss ; and, since that time, the Kings of France had retained large levies in their pay. The effect of the Burgundian wars had been to increase enormously the passion for foreign service and for its rewards ; and when, at the

close of the 15th century, the plains of Italy became the theatre of strife, all thought of everything but war was abandoned; trade and manufactures, which had already begun to languish, were extinguished; the country was drained of its inhabitants; and in places there were none left even to bury the dead.

Louis XII. was in alliance with the Swiss. His jealousy of the Empire had caused him to conclude a treaty with them for ten years, by which he had bound himself to aid them both with men and money in return for the privilege of enlisting soldiers among them in times of peace. Before the Swabian war was over he had mediated for its close, in order that the enlistments for his Italian armies might begin; and volunteers, without waiting for the struggles within their own country to cease, had begun to flock to his standards. But by the time of the Peace of Basle the Milanese had been already won; and the King of France, less anxious to conciliate his allies, now treated them with indifference, and even with contempt. Arrears of subsidy under the treaty were not forthcoming; the pay of the volunteers was withheld. The governments of the Cantons were thus alienated; and, while they refused to sanction his enlistments, the neglected volunteers, deserting his army, went over to that of Sforza, who, profiting eagerly by their dissatisfaction, reconquered his Duchy, and entered 1500 his capital in triumph.

The Swiss, however, had not the glory of retaining what they had won. Louis XII. beheld his dangers, and had again recourse to promises, and his ambassador to bribes. As a government each Canton still refused

A.D.
—

to act ; but while there were volunteers still fighting under Sforza, there were others returning to the French standards, and conquering back again the Duchy for his enemy. At length, at Novara, the rival companies, that belonged to the same nation, were arrayed against each other. Better, says a great historian, would it have been that Swiss should then have murdered Swiss than that what actually occurred should have happened. The Swiss within Novara gave up the Italian garrison ; they allowed Duke Ludovico to be arrested in their midst : and they retired to their own country with gold that was the wages of dishonour. Some years elapsed, and a Diet resolved that the treachery of Novara should be kept hidden ; but the resolve was fruitless ; and the fact stands out more clearly from the self-conviction that prompted its concealment.

A pause to take notice of an acquisition that had been of long-recognized importance is here necessary. A desire more honourable than that for pay had been present in the minds of some of the Confederates. The men of Uri had remembered their ancient conquests, that they had once held Bellinzona and the country stretching to the Lake Maggiore. Since the peace, which had surrendered all the Italian acquisitions, in 1427, they had made efforts to regain their losses ; trivial quarrels had been seized upon as pretexts for hostilities ; and, in 1479, a victory at Giornico had recovered for them the Leventine, or upper valley, which had long in feeling as well as name been Swiss. Now, the opportunity seemed come for extending their possessions ; and a little band, proclaiming their

alliance with the King of France, and under cover of his name, gained entrance into Bellinzona, with the consent of the inhabitants. From that moment the town was Swiss. The government of Uri now claimed to hold it as a permanent possession; they recalled some promises of Louis in earlier days; and, unappeased by the offer of a temporary cession, they even took up arms against the French in support of their pretensions. Locarno was attacked; the shores of the 1501 Lake Maggiore trembled. Their cause was aided by those who still clamoured for arrears of pay; and even an invasion of Burgundy by the Confederacy was threatened. Exposed to danger as well as to importunity, Louis gave up the place; the Cantons collectively, in return for this and for a sum of money, 1503 agreeing to satisfy or to stifle the demands of his creditors. Later, when in their turn the French had again lost Lombardy, the Swiss found means to add to their possessions Locarno, Lugano, and Domo; and a territory corresponding to the modern canton of Ticino became the fruit, unfortunately the sole fruit, of the Italian wars.

Gold, which was freely offered to reconcile both governments and people to a continuance of their support of the French cause, was gradually accomplishing its object. For nine years, during which the 1500-9 King of France remained in undisturbed possession of Milan, the Swiss served under his banners. They did not fight against the Emperor, their allegiance to him always was reserved, and they would even have escorted Maximilian to assume the Imperial crown at 1507 Rome, had his journey thither ever taken place. But

A.D. they shared in the victories over other enemies. Their
1507 valour gave the proud city of Genoa into the hands of
Louis XII., and crushed the power of the Republic of
1509 Venice in the victory of Agnadello. Had wisdom
dictated the counsels of the French monarch, he would
have laboured to conciliate the allies who might have
mastered for him the whole peninsula. But again
self-confidence was fatal. Instead of gratitude the
Swiss met insult; their pay was again withheld; and
the period of the Ten Years' Treaty expired with
indifference on one side and dissatisfaction on the
other. The way was thus prepared for a change of
politics; and soon the Swiss were again numbered
among the enemies, instead of the supporters, of the
French power.

A churchman, Matthew Schinner, becomes the leading person of the time. Risen, through his abilities, from the humblest origin to the rank of Bishop of Sion in the Valais, he was distinguished by his uncompromising opposition to French interests, and was rewarded by Pope Julius II., who had begun to dread the preponderance of France in Italy, with the dignity of Cardinal. Eager in the Papal cause, fighting for it in the front rank of his country's armies, pleading for it at foreign courts, and combating for it the French intrigues at home, he was now able for a time to carry his country with him. Under his influence the Swiss continued to resist the renewed overtures of Louis XII., and sent a force of 20,000 men to share with the Venetians in the glory of driving their old paymasters from Italy. Again the Duchy of Milan was overrun in triumph. The Pope rewarded his

brave champions with the title of Defenders of the Freedom of the Christian Church; and Maximilian Sforza, the son of Ludovico, was raised to the Ducal throne by the arms and influence of those who had first supported and then betrayed his father. Novara, which had seen the treachery of earlier days, now saw the atonement for it in the steadfast valour which upheld the new sovereign. French armies, again relying on the fickle disposition of the populace, re-entered the Duchy, and again appeared about to conquer it almost as speedily as it had been lost. But again the old stronghold to the last defied the invaders' power; and before its walls there was a battle fought 1513 which shattered the French power and raised the fame of the Confederacy to the highest pitch. The honour of the day, says Guicciardini, is not with the French or Germans, with the Spaniards or with the Venetians, but solely with the Swiss, who had to sustain alone the whole force of the French arms. They had reached their highest fame; they had humbled the French power; they had verily become the chastisers of kings.

Their victory was followed by an incursion into Burgundy, which spread terror beyond Dijon; but, deluded by the promise of a treaty which was never ratified, they retired without advantage from their success. Indignation, and the open pretensions of Francis I., who now succeeded to Louis XII., kept up the hostility to France. Negotiations, indeed, were undertaken, but remained without result; and again a French army passed across the Alps to wrest the much vexed provinces of Lombardy from their

A.D. — possessors. Not less than 30,000 Swiss poured forth for their defence ; but divisions among them detracted from their strength. Some were now favourable to the French proposals ; others looked forward to support from the Emperor, who was already meditating hostilities against Francis I. Doubt and distrust began to prevail ; and a peace had even been agreed upon at Gallarate, when the Cardinal of Sion, still burning with animosity against the French, and loudly protesting against the conduct of his countrymen, persuaded a small detachment to attack the French, and, the remainder of the army uniting for their aid, the battle of Marignano was begun.

1515 A camp, protected by its natural advantages, and held by an army of some six and thirty thousand men, was now assailed by a force of four and twenty thousand Swiss. For two long days the battle raged. The moon, which rose upon the combatants as the first sun set, prolonged the carnage till almost midnight. The dawn beheld the fight renewed by men who had remained throughout the night where they had stood. The strife waxed hotter than before. The King of France in his royal mantle, the Cardinal of Sion in his scarlet tippet, were seen at the head of their troops. The fortune of the day was still doubtful ; when, on a sudden, the war cry of St. Mark was heard. A body of Venetians, appearing in the rear, now threatened to surround the Swiss. Their valour from this time was hopeless. Slowly and sullenly they turned to retreat. Their retreat, however, was not that of a conquered army. Undaunted, unbroken, they left the field, and arrived at Milan, discouraged, but not discomfited.

‘This,’ said the veteran Trivulcio, who commanded in the French army, “has been a battle not of men but of giants.” “Those whom Cæsar alone had conquered,” said the legend upon the commemorative medal, “Francis has conquered.”

The result was renewed divisions in the Confederacy; and the pride of wounded honour for a time struggled against peace. But gold again secured the aim of 1516 France; and the Perpetual Peace was signed in 1516. Successive ages ratified and renewed the terms which were now agreed upon; and the opening of a fresh era may be dated from this time. The Swiss Cantons bound themselves henceforward to furnish France with stipulated levies at a stipulated rate: they accepted for their contingents the pay and the position of French companies. It is early to take notice of the results to which the Peace thus signed gave rise; but its effects may more conveniently be mentioned here than at a later period. The Swiss Cantons had bartered the remnant of the independence still attaching to their arms, and they lost with it the respect and honour that had followed them. The mercenary service, from this time, became one of increasing degradation. Fighting in every cause, for the desire of gold soon led to the conclusion of treaties with others as well as with the French monarchs, the Swiss soldiery became the hirelings of Europe. There were leaders who prospered through the bribes and the consideration which they secured; there were more, however, who suffered through the false hopes and the neglect which they had to encounter. Ill fed, ill clothed, the Swiss were often subjected to want and

A.D. to disease. Men of honour, and individual Cantons, raised their voices in vain; the all-absorbing hope of gain prevailed, and secured the continuance and even the extension of the mercenary enlistments.

The campaigns of Italy, begun in glory, were ended in disaster. At Bicocca, at the Sesia, and at Pavia, the valour of the Swiss was powerless to avert defeat; and the absence of all lustre derived from victory combines to make the further record of the mercenary service uninteresting as well as unimportant. The Confederates had not risen to their opportunities; they had not moulded Italy as they might, nor held the balance of power in Europe. The simple peasants had not been tacticians. They had been worsted in diplomacy; they were now worsted in the field. The changes in the art of war had deprived mere valour of its strength; and the exhaustion of population, and the corruption which had been introduced, accelerated decline. But the glory of the Swiss was not passing from them before they had acquired a fame such as no nation before or after them has achieved. And if the Confederation has been honoured in the estimation of the world, if it has endured throughout the many changes that have threatened its existence, it is due assuredly in some degree to the unfading remembrance of the many early and most glorious successes of its arms.

The development of the Confederacy, as well as its fame, was now becoming complete. The Perpetual Peace had confirmed the possession of most of their Italian conquests to the Swiss; and these were henceforth ruled as subject bailiwicks. In 1513, Appenzell had been added to the number of the Allied Cantons,

and had made up the number of thirteen, which was to remain without increase till the days of Napoleon. Already Neuchatel was in the hands of the Confederacy; and, though soon to be restored to a more rightful owner, was to remain bound thenceforth by real ties as well as by sympathy to its neighbours. The Pays de Vaud within a few years was to be 1536 conquered and annexed. The powerful city of Geneva, long fretful under the Dukes of Savoy, had applied to Freyburg for protection; and was soon, by its treaties of co-citizenship with that Canton and with Bern, to become in spirit, if not in name, a Swiss city. On the east, the Leagues of the Grisons, though independent, were yet in form and feeling united to the Swiss. So that the harmony with allied states, or the subjection of conquered ones, already was foreshadowing the limits that were hereafter to be reached.

It is now the modern history of Switzerland which we have to trace, a long and often lamentable record of intestine jealousies and quarrels. The Confederacy, becoming divided within itself, now loses the importance and the interest which it had till now possessed. The broad band of union which had given strength and dignity to its actions is relaxed, and the struggles of the Cantons against each other, their religious hatreds, and their internal disputes, combine to degrade their history. Absorbed in its own petty politics the country now ceases to be of importance to Europe, except as the recruiting ground for its armies. Exhausted by the continued traffic of blood for gold, it is still further weakened and abased; and three inglorious centuries succeed to the ages of fame and honour which had preceded them.

A.D. The Reformation is the first event to claim our
— notice. The same corruptions and the same scandals
which had been seen in other countries had had their
illustrations in Switzerland; the same shameless pro-
1519 mulgation of indulgences brought growing indignation
to its limit. In Zurich, Ulrich Zwingli, a preacher
of the Cathedral, whose name was destined to become
famous, took up the theme. He had already inveighed
against the corruption that pervaded every rank; and
he now cried loudly for reformation in the church.
Adopting many of the principles of Luther, he steadily
advanced in opposition against Rome. He carried
1523 the Great Council of the city with him. The Bible
was declared to be the rule of life; the interpretation
of priests was set aside. The celibacy of the clergy,
the worship of images, even the mass itself, were
gradually abolished. A new religion reigned at Zurich,
and Zwingli was its apostle.

Indignation was excited among the Cantons that
still cherished the old faith. They even threatened to
exclude the apostate State from the Diets, and could
not restrain themselves from acts of violence against
her people. In some, however, the new doctrines spread.
The great town of Bern adopted them in 1527. St.
Gall, Appenzell, Schaffhausen, and Basle followed.
The bailiwicks of Thurgau and Aargau did the same.
Soleure and Glaris wavered. Divisions were thus
created; and while some were for maintaining the
supremacy of the old faith, others, with the fresh zeal
of converts, were for enforcing the new doctrines. A
loyal observance of the right of independence, which
had been promised to each Canton at its admission to

the Confederation, might have restrained dissensions within local limits; but political ambition was mingled with religious zeal; and a war was kindled, the first and fatal precedent for the many struggles that have since divided the Confederation.

Zwingli had not the mild and lowly spirit of the New Testament; he was rather the fiery hero of the Old. He was a soldier and a politician, as well as an ecclesiastic; and he aimed not merely at toleration but at pre-eminence for his religion and his State. Banding the Protestants into a separate alliance, he deepened 1528 fatally the dissensions within the Confederacy. He provoked the Catholics to retaliate by a league of their own, and to admit to it even a prince of the House of Austria. He next cried for war against his enemies, and led forth an army to attack them. He mourned over the mediation which postponed strife; and, continually increasing his demands, maintaining that all Cantons should be compelled to tolerate the preaching of the new faith, and that Bern and Zurich, the main props of the Confederacy, and the supporters of his religion, should be allowed increased preponderance in the Diets, he provoked at length a second struggle, in which his own blood and that of many others was shed. At Cappel the men of Zurich were 1531 defeated by an army of 8,000 Catholics. The great Reformer lost his life upon the field, and his ashes were scattered with ignominy to the winds. A second defeat came speedily upon the first, and the aspirations of Zurich were for the time ended.

A peace at Dennikon in 1531 marks the acknowledgment of the principle of each Canton's independence.

A.D. Zurich, restrained from all encroachment on the liberties of others, was still allowed to retain for herself the worship which she had chosen. But the Confederacy was now fatally divided. There is, perhaps, no other instance of a State so deeply and so permanently sundered by the Reformation. Other governments adopted or rejected the reformed religion for their dominions as a whole; the Confederacy, by its constitution, was constrained to allow each Canton to determine its religion for itself; and the presence of Catholic and Reformed States side by side, each clinging with obstinacy to the religion of their choice, became the origin of jealousies and wars which have threatened more than once to rend asunder the ties of union.

Next to the endless but often uninteresting theme of religious differences comes the history of the annexations which have been already alluded to. Beyond the pale of the Confederacy, in the direction of the Jura, was a country divided between many governments, which the princes of Savoy, the Hapsburgs of the West, had once effectually ruled, but which had become morselled among many claimants during a century and a half of weakness, and which Duke Charles III. of Savoy was now seeking to reconcile to his authority. Geneva was the chief city of these parts. By cession and by inheritance the Dukes of Savoy had acquired the rights which had once belonged to the Bishops of the city and the Counts of the surrounding province. The power which they would have exercised, however, was contested by the people; and factions, in favour of or against their

rule, divided the city. The alliance of Bern and Freyburg was at length sought for ; and the conclusion of a treaty of co-citizenship in 1526, opened at once the prospect of a collision between the House of Savoy and the Confederacy. That collision was not long delayed. In 1536, after repeated acts of provocation by Charles III., seven thousand men of Bern appeared within Geneva. To reach the city they had traversed the Pays de Vaud ; after entering it they passed onwards to the provinces of Gex and Chablais. All that they traversed they annexed. Even the city which they had entered they would have ruled, had not some sparks of honour and the entreaties of its inhabitants restrained them from the annihilation of the liberties which they had been called on to defend. The men of Freyburg and of the Valais at the same time made humbler conquests from Savoy. Later, the strong fortress of Chillon, and the rich bishopric of Lausanne, were seized upon by Bern. A wide extent of territory was thus added to the Confederacy ; and again a considerable population speaking the French tongue was brought under the dominion of the Teutonic Cantons.

These acquisitions were extended, in 1555, by the cession of the county of Gruyère, through the embarrassments of its last impoverished Count. They were diminished, however, by the loss of Gex and Chablais in 1564. The jealousy of many of the Cantons at the good fortune of their confederates, and the reviving power of the House of Savoy, had made the conquests insecure. Emmanuel Philibert, the hero of St. Quentin, the ally of the great sovereigns of

A.D. France and Spain, asked back his provinces; and
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1564 prudence counselled the surrender of the two, in order
to obtain a confirmation of the possession of the rest.
The southern side of the Lake Lemman, which had thus
been momentarily held, and which nature seemed to
have intended to belong to the Confederacy, was thus
abandoned. The frontiers, however, which were now
secured became permanent ones. The Dukes of
Savoy had transferred much of their ambition, with
their capital, beyond the Alps; and the Confederates
remained secure in their remaining possessions.

The Confederacy might now have added further to
its power by admitting new members to its League
who would have been worthy in every way to stand
beside the older Cantons. Constance, a city important
on the east, the natural capital as it might have
seemed for Thurgau, had urged its own incorporation.
The religious tendencies of its inhabitants, however,
had made it suspected; and it was allowed to fall in
- 1548, without hope of recovery, under the dominion of
Austria. Geneva, a city placed upon the confines of
Italy, of France, and of Germany, important therefore
both for trade and for defence, was pleading loudly
for admission. The jealousy of Bern, and later the
hostility of the Catholic Cantons to the faith of which
the city had become the centre, refused the request.
She remained a mere ally, with even her independence
not always ungrudgingly defended against the assaults
of her enemies. Religious zeal indeed was fatal during
this century to political sagacity. Under its influence
the alliance with the rich city of Mulhausen, which
had endured for more than a hundred years, was

thrown off in 1587; the overtures of Strasburg for alliance were rejected; the proposals of the Grisons Leagues were repulsed. The opportunities of the Confederates were thus neglected, while those of their neighbours became proportionately increased. A.D. —

Religion holds indeed too large a place in the history of the time. The ardent zeal of the adherents of both old and new faith provoked dissensions. While Calvin and his successors triumphed at Geneva, the Church of Rome made strenuous and not ineffectual efforts to recover her lost authority within the Cantons. St. Francis of Sales and St. Charles Borromeo, men whose virtues have secured them canonization from their church and respect from their adversaries, became the apostles of reviving Catholicism. The first was the chief opponent of Calvinism in the west; the second, by preaching, by example, by journeyings in the remotest hamlets of his diocese, brought back to the old faith the wavering inhabitants of the Italian valleys of the Confederation. Through his influence concessions for his faith were obtained. The Jesuits passed over the St. Gothard, and extended their monasteries and their influence among the Cantons. A nuncio was admitted in 1578. On every side the acceptance of the supremacy of Rome became increasingly apparent; and again there were signs of an ominous revival of the separate leagues within the Confederacy.

The progress that is to be traced during the 16th century is such as was due to the times rather than to the people. The cessation of foreign wars and the fewer inducements for mercenary service gave leisure

A.D. — for the arts of peace; and agriculture and trade resumed their progress. Already Switzerland began to be sought by refugees from England, France, and Italy. The arts of weaving and of dyeing were introduced, and the manufacture of watches began at Geneva. The age again was one of devotion; and though, under the mask of religion, a furious intolerance and a narrow puritanism of feeling had infected both parties, so that the old pleasures and even the old sports were discouraged, yet luxury and licence were repressed, and morality advanced, if at the expense of manliness. In the field of letters Basle had acquired a European reputation. Her university had been founded in 1460; and the names of Paracelsus and Erasmus, of Holbein, Gessner, and Froben, shed a partial brightness over the country. But, at the root of all, decay had begun. The whole constitution of the States was changing. The growing absolutism of their neighbours had given the example; and the governments, instead of remaining popular, were becoming aristocratic. The rights of citizenship, which had been freely accorded to those who had lived or fought with the Cantons, were now difficult to obtain; and power was jealously retained in the hands of the few. A division of classes ensued, destroying the old spirit of equality, and fostering oppression. The subject bailiwicks especially were sufferers. Their governors were often tyrannous and corrupt; and the inhabitants were verging on the condition of mere serfs. Among the governing classes also disputes multiplied; and, religion or intrigue furnishing the pretexts, the Cantons became disunited

and contemptible both from their dissensions and from their weakness.

War, which had been almost abandoned except in the service of others, comes little into the annals of the Confederation as a State. Swiss mercenaries, to the number of many thousands, fought in France, and were found in the service of almost every prince in Europe. The multitude were still attracted by the pay and by the pleasures of a soldier's life, their leaders by the wealth and the consideration which was lavished upon them; and protests had no weight to check the eager rush for foreign service. Swiss contingents still gave aid to the allies of the Confederates; and Geneva, still threatened by the Dukes of Savoy, was not unfrequently defended. But there were no wars that can be called either national or important; and, as a rule, the governments of the Cantons reposed in peace.

As another century advances, there is strife at the very gates of the Confederation. The ambassadors and the armies of the greatest Powers of Europe appeared to dispute for the possession of an Alpine valley. The sovereigns of Spain and Austria, united by ties of policy and of blood, were scheming to connect their provinces of Milan and of Tyrol by the acquisitions of the Valteline, a possession of the Grisons. France and Venice, jealous of such an attempt, desired to prevent them; and the Leagues, already divided within themselves, were inflamed and distracted by the threats and by the intrigues of foreign Powers. But the Confederacy itself was never driven into war. It was able to stand aloof again,

A.D. when these interests, giving way before the larger questions of which Europe was becoming the theatre were succeeded by the complications of the Thirty Years' War. The Empire might be torn in sunder; Swedes and Imperialists alike might violate, as they did, Swiss territory; but its neutrality, a result of impotence as well as of wisdom, was not abandoned.

1648 The Peace of Westphalia, the final close of wars in which the Swiss had had no part, was yet made to yield advantages to the Confederation. When plenipotentiaries from every Power in Europe were assembled at Munster, there appeared among them the envoy of Switzerland. The Confederation claimed, not a reward for its actions, but a recognition of the position to which time had raised it. Since the year 1607 it had disdained to solicit any confirmation of its privileges; but it had still cities which were styled Imperial, with the Imperial eagle on their coins and on their walls, and with a jurisdiction asserted over them by the Imperial chambers. Now the last claims and symbols of sovereignty were surrendered. The Confederacy was not more powerful, but the Empire was weaker. France and Sweden were ready to support demands in its favour; and Ferdinand IV. gave up, with a show of readiness, what he saw that he could no longer maintain. The Confederacy, by the 6th article of the Treaty, was at length pronounced to be absolutely free.

It is still, however, a history of decline, decline extending down to the period of the French Revolution that we have to trace; and there are few events of interest or importance to be noted as the years pass

on. Religious passions and the thirst for power make up the unprofitable history of the times. The growing spirit of aristocracy appeared to become more haughty and more intolerable after the Thirty Years' War; and the miseries which began to be felt embittered the relations between the subjects and their masters. To the old grievances of oppression and disregard of privileges were now added impoverishment and debt. Taxation had become necessary; the coin was debased; and many, whose lands had been pledged in order to enable them to share in the false state of luxury which the wealth of foreign refugees had induced, were falling into the condition of serfs. The complaints of the men of the Entlibuch as to the coin, and the threats with which they had been met of coercion, such as they might have beheld in foreign lands, was the kindling spark for rebellion. The demands of the insurgents were extravagant; but for many the sole hope of release from their obligations lay in war, and the movement spread. 1653 The peasants of Bern, of Basle, and of Soleure united in the rising, which was to be known thenceforward as the Peasant War. They swore their alliance after the fashion of old times; their leaders took the name and dress of the Three Tells; but, with less wisdom than was said to have been of old, they wasted precious time, and gave the opportunity to the great Cantons to assemble their forces. Their plan of attack also was overheard and betrayed. Yet they were able to march with a strength of 20,000 men upon Bern to treat for peace; and they maintained a discipline which few armies at such a time could have boasted. Bern yielded, then

A.D. ——— would have recalled what she had done; and the Peasants, angered, passed into the subject bailiwick of Aargau. They found their men already risen and fighting against the troops of Zurich; and, uniting their forces, they engaged again in battle against their oppressors at Wohlenschwyl. But the insurgents, though more numerous, were here defeated. The want of artillery weakened them; and the peasants of the Aargau laid down their arms, while their allies withdrew to continue a divided strife and to be separately defeated within their own Cantons. The war henceforth was at an end, and the work of punishment began. Every severity was used against the rebels. Their leaders were hunted down and executed; and all who had taken any share, even the smallest, in the insurrection, were compelled to expiate it in their persons or their property. Luzern alone, after her vengeance, restored their rights to her subjects. The other Cantons saw only a just plea for the extension of their power, and retrenched still further the privileges which they now considered to have been forfeited.

1656 War quickly followed upon war. In 1656 the treatment of the Protestants of Arth by Schwytz gave a pretext to the Reformed Cantons for interference. They remembered the policy of Zwingli; and they hoped, under cover of religion, to increase their power as well as to defend their faith. Zurich impatiently called forth her troops, and did not wait for the decisions of the Diet, which was at once dissolved. The forces of Bern followed; but marching on Villmergen they were defeated by the Catholics.

while on the same day the men of Zurich were repulsed from Rapperschwyl. The cause of aggression had failed; and a peace was signed, which by again recognizing the right of every Canton to regulate its own affairs, became an admission on the part of the Protestants of defeat.

The close of the 17th century, the age of Louis XIV., had necessarily its influence upon Switzerland. Since the days of Francis I. the Confederacy had been linked to France by the alliances which had been renewed, by the enlistments which had continued, and by the subserviency which intrigues and pensions had secured. The French ambassador had balanced parties and had ruled the governments. To the protection of his sovereign the discontented Cantons had recurred; and no other Power had attempted to share this influence. In 1663 the whole Confederacy had again renewed its alliance; but, as the schemes of Louis were developed, the Swiss began to hesitate as to the sincerity of their ally. The occupation of Franche Comté, and of Strasburg with which they had been allied, was a shock; and the building of the fortress of Hunningen, in dangerous proximity to Basle, appeared a standing menace to the Cantons. Old privileges, the price of blood, were at the same time revoked; and a new and stronger interference was attempted with the governments. Distrust was fostered by the refugees who fled from their country after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; and the Protestant Cantons, who had never heartily supported the French cause, at last engaged in an alliance with England. During the wars that crowded upon the

A.D. — close of the reign of Louis XIV., no less than 50,000 Swiss were fighting in the various armies that were engaged; and, though the larger portion were still upon the side of France, there were many who bore their share in the great victories that curbed the power and extinguished the designs which had threatened both the Confederacy and Europe.

The humiliation of France was the preservation of Switzerland. But the Confederacy was again to be wasted by a civil war, which, though nominally for religion, was in reality for political power. Disputes in the Toggenburg had led to religious dissensions, and Schwytz, as before, had espoused the Catholic side, while Zurich and Bern again took advantage of the opportunity to declare war upon the smaller Cantons. The Catholic forces were far inferior to the Protestant, yet the first successes were upon their side, and they defeated a detachment of Bernese troops at Bremgarten. The federal town of Baden, however, was taken by the Protestants; and, after a fruitless mediation on the part of the neutral Cantons, the war was finally decided, by a second battle at Villmergen, in favour of the Protestants. Bern and Zurich had reversed the
1712 decision of a century before. They now gained the joint government of the common bailiwicks, and the repeal of the treaty of 1531, which had appeared injurious to the reformed Cantons.

The greater power of the larger and Protestant States brought greater discord into the Confederacy. A Perpetual Alliance began to be spoken of between Bern and England; and the Catholic Cantons, in their opposition, were ready to agree to the partition of

Switzerland between France and Austria. Fear prevented such an act; but a secret treaty was signed, by which France engaged to procure the restitution of the Catholic losses; and the suspicious apprehensions of the Protestants were aroused. War, however, was not renewed. The death of Louis XIV., and the exhaustion of France, caused much of the exciting influence to subside; while the spirit of discord, which had again invaded the Confederacy, brought occupation to each Canton in the settlement of its own affairs.

The Swiss historians lament over the 18th century as the age of internal dissensions and revolutions, when pride and selfishness brought down disgrace and misery upon their country. Each Canton became divided against itself; and even the smallest had their insurrections, their demagogues, and their tyrants. Religious bitterness still prevailed; all questions of alliance and of policy were jealously discussed; and the factions of Moderates and Radicals, names used to denote the supporters or opponents of government during the Peasant War, again reappeared. Grievances were not wanting. The people had been excluded from power, and their rulers were tyrants. At Bern and Freyburg the list of citizens was closed; and the Cantons were governed by a hereditary aristocracy, whose arbitrary acts had made them formidable. Zurich, by a timely insurrection, was checked in her progress to the same condition, and reforms were granted; but the power still remained with the few, though it did not become hereditary; and the government was at once tyrannous and corrupt. Luzern

A.D.

A.D. — was ruled by families who exhausted the State revenues by their embezzlements; and the same evils were to be found in other Cantons. Privileges again were everywhere disregarded; rights of conscience received no respect; and the people were being driven everywhere to rebel against their oppressors. As such risings were subdued, the sternest measures of confiscation, of torture, and of death, followed. The severity of Uri deprived her most faithful subjects of the Leventine, who had been momentarily deluded into rebellion, of all their privileges; and the names of Davel, Henzi, and Chenaux, recall the vengeance of Bern and Freyburg against individuals who by their leadership had dared to become formidable.

There is no pleasure or advantage in dwelling upon such scenes. They show the spectacle of a country disorganized, with governments that are unsound, and with subjects already trained to revolution. The redeeming features are to be found in the great names of literature, which by their connection with Switzerland have shed some brightness over her disturbed annals. To this century are due the writings of Muller and Lavater, the preaching of Zollikoffer, and the science of the Bernouillis and of de Saussure. Zurich could boast the labours of Pestalozzi; while, among the neighbours of the Confederacy, Neuchatel claimed the great publicist Vattel, and Geneva was the birthplace of Delolme and of Rousseau. There were others, whose honours, though gained in foreign countries, were not the less Swiss; such as Euler, who directed the science of shipbuilding and navigation at Berlin and St.

Petersburg, and Haller, whose science won its A.D. ———
homage at Gottingen from George III. Nor among
foreigners, whose greatness honoured the Confederacy,
must be omitted the names of Voltaire and of Gibbon.

But the storm of revolution came, and minor interests gave way before its course. In 1792 the news was brought of the humiliation of Louis XVI., and of the devotion and massacre of his Swiss guards. Sorrow and indignation, however keen, were silent. The revolutionary spirit was already spreading into Switzerland. Geneva was disturbed; its factions were preparing the way for the annexation to France, which was soon to follow. In the Valais, in Schaffhausen, and in the bishopric of Basle, insurrections had begun. The governments of the Cantons, still arbitrary and exclusive as before, had refused to conciliate; and everywhere injustice and oppression was being made the incentive to strife.

French policy took advantage of its opportunities. The Italian valleys belonging to the Grisons rebelled, 1797 and were annexed to the Cisalpine Republic. The bishopric of Basle was incorporated with France. Such acts upon the very verge of the Confederacy, could not fail to have their influence. The subject bailiwicks of Vaud and Aargau rose in turn; the tardy concessions of their masters were now useless: and French protection was offered to all who were discontented. Bern, desperate, determined to defend her rights; and 30,000 men were brought into the field. But discussion and delay proved fatal. The divisions and the jealousies of the smaller Cantons made them refuse help. The more generous cities of

A.D. Freyburg and Soleure were compelled to open their gates before a French force ; and, after an obstinate battle beneath their own walls, the Bernese surrendered, and in their fall dragged down the whole Confederation.

1798 A new Constitution, the offspring of French influence, was now put forward ; and after a heroic but vain resistance on the part of the Forest Cantons, who beheld too late their mistake in not uniting with Bern, was finally accepted. The Helvetic Republic, One and Indivisible, was constituted. All the traditions of the Confederacy were uprooted. The autonomy of the Cantons, their long fought for and still cherished possession, was taken from them ; they became degraded into mere departments. Schwytz, Uri, Unterwald, and Zug, were fused together under the name of the Forest States. Of the subject bailiwicks, the principal were elevated to the rank of Cantons ; and over all was set a Directory, a Senate, and a Chamber of Deputies, after the French model.

Such arrangements were not conducive to tranquillity. The towns, like Bern and Zurich, that had been infected by French influence, the subject bailiwicks, that had gained their freedom, were willing to accept the changes ; but, elsewhere, there were murmurings at the loss of independence, at the general subserviency to France, at the expenses of the new form of government, and at the multitude of foreign soldiery that were still quartered upon the country. Insurrections followed. The French disgraced their name by savage cruelties ; and even Swiss were found to aid in the coercion of their rebellious countrymen.

Then followed the great struggles of Austrians, French, and Russians in 1799; and the country became the battle-field of foreign armies. Divisions, so far from ceasing, appeared to revive; for while some still clung to France and to her schemes for unity of government, there were others who looked to Austria for support in restoring the old Federal Constitution. Projects for government were brought forward and were rejected; the country became a prey to its own feuds; and anarchy at length prepared the way for the renewed interference of strangers.

“Inhabitants of Switzerland, I will be your 1803 mediator,” proclaimed Napoleon. Under such auspices the Act of Mediation was issued at Paris in 1803, and the country rested for a time under the compromise which it granted. The autonomy of the Cantons was restored, and the Forest States regained their independence; the subject bailiwicks of Aargau, Thurgau, Vaud, and Ticino, retained their freedom; and the allied States of the Grisons and St. Gall were united to the Confederacy, making up the total number of the Cantons to nineteen.

Ten years now followed of uncertainty and distrust, but yet of comparative tranquillity; for the great events of Europe were diverting the attention of Napoleon. The progress of conquest, however, brought necessarily apprehensions; and the fear of ultimate if not immediate extinction pervaded the Republic. The allied principality of Neuchatel had been given to Berthier, a French Marshal; the Valais and Geneva, had been incorporated in 1810 with France; and the districts of Bellinzona and Lugano with the new kingdom of

A.D. Italy. Greater encroachments yet might follow ; and
 — as the Republic looked around she could only behold
 and tremble. But fear maintained her still in the
 alliance which she dreaded ; fear still sent forth Swiss
 levies to aid the conqueror, and to prepare, as it might
 be, the destruction of their country ; and even as the
 tide turned, and as the troops of Austria passed on to
 aid in the overthrow of the common enemy, fear still
 was counselling neutrality, and refused to aid the
 coalition for which in reality the country wished
 success.

Yet though no sharers in the attainment of the end
 the Swiss were sharers in its consequences. They
 1814 annulled in 1814 the Act of Mediation, and by the
 Treaty of Paris were declared free to regulate their
 own government. By a Federal Pact, adopted in
 1815 1815, there were now added to the nineteen Cantons
 the Valais, Neuchatel, and Geneva. The ancient Diet,
 and the ancient Cantonal governments, reappeared.
 The Congress of Vienna, interfering only in minor
 questions of territory, gave its sanction to the decisions
 of the Swiss ; and the country received the boon of
 being declared neutral and inviolable.

A reaction from the liberal tendencies of the Napo-
 leonic age had occurred ; and dissatisfaction within
 the Confederacy did not fail to declare itself. There
 was no outburst, however, for fifteen years ; and during
 this time a progress in material prosperity is to be
 1830 traced. In 1830, however, occurred the revolution
 which overthrew the throne of Charles X ; and the
 long smouldering embers seemed now about to break
 into a flame. The governments, however, were too

doubtful of their strength to meet a conflict, and they gave way before it came. Many in fear revised their constitutions for themselves; a few submitted them to popular approval; and the old aristocratic limitations were everywhere abandoned. There was no violence, however, in the changes that occurred, and the country secured its liberties in peace.

The revision of the Federal Pact now seemed to many to follow naturally upon the revision of the Cantonal Constitutions. The independence of the different States, so jealously maintained by some, was now viewed by others as a cause of weakness; and the consolidation and centralization of the various governments was eagerly demanded. The following years again saw schemes proposed and rejected. The excitement became great: rival diets met; and there were even contests between Swiss and Swiss. The Federal authority indeed proved able to restore peace; but, in the absence of any final settlement there was irritation left, and later questions, as they arose, were not treated in any spirit of harmony or conciliation.

Religious questions were again beginning to be prominent; and they now combined with politics to divide the Confederacy. A Concordat, framed at Baden, in 1834, with a view to the regulation of a national church, had been condemned by Pope Gregory 1835 XVI., on account of its Erastian character. Bitterness of feeling had been thereby increased. New opinions also had come in with the spread of revolutionary thought, and with the arrival of refugees, to whom Switzerland, to her own disquiet, was now affording a home. In some of the Cantons power seemed to be

A.D. passing from the Catholics. In Aargau the convents
1841 had been suppressed; and the Diet, though blaming
the act, had ominously avoided a decree for their
complete restoration. The clerical party felt driven
to resistance. The Jesuits, who were already estab-
lished in the Valais, Schwytz, and Unterwald, lent
their influence to the movement; and tumults, and
even bloodshed, took place in various quarters. A
separate League, or Sonderbund, the precursor of
1813 of the Confederacy, was now formed between the
Catholic Cantons of Luzern, Uri, Schwytz, Unterwald,
Zug, Valais, and Inner Appenzell. Luzern, the pre-
siding Canton of the Confederacy, then determined,
in spite of the hostility of which they had already
become the object, to admit the Jesuits to her soil;
and her act, following so closely upon the struggles
which they were believed to have fomented, increased
the existing animosities. Attempts at violence were
made by bands of hostile adventurers within the
Canton, and everywhere the Catholics and the
Protestants began to range themselves in opposition.
The Canton of Freyburg now sought a formal union
with the Sonderbund of the Catholics; and the
attempt revealed the existence of the League which
had hitherto been concealed. Many of the Cantons,
indignant at a union which from its partial character
was a violation of the Federal Constitution, and
which was moreover formed in hostile interests to
their own, invoked the authority of the Diet. The
required majority of votes for a condemnation of the
League was for a time not forthcoming; but a change

of government at Geneva, and a temporary triumph in the elections at St. Gall, at length made up the number; and the Diet, in 1847, decreed the dissolution of the Sonderbund, the reform of the Federal Pact, and the expulsion of the Jesuits. A.D.

The Sonderbund, as had been foreseen, refused to dissolve; and the Diet now voted for an armed execution. The contest was short, but it was decisive. Freyburg, detached from her allies, capitulated. The forces of the other Cantons were defeated in a battle at Gislikon, and their submission speedily followed. The triumph of the conquerors was used with moderation; but the defeated party had to submit to payment of the expenses of the war, to the banishment of the Jesuits, and to the reform of the Constitution so long demanded and debated.

Since the wars of Villmergen there had been no such strife of Swiss against Swiss. The remains of the old religious hatred had come down to the 19th century, and had again drawn forth the sword. Men often speak with ignorance of Switzerland, and believe that the familiar traditions of early harmony and honour have remained the type of later and less known ages. But could they look back but for a few years, and see the dissension and the intolerance that have prevailed even to our own days, and recognize that Switzerland has the melancholy fame among nations of having been the last to abandon as well as the first to engage in religious wars, a truer if less favourable estimate would be formed.

The new Constitution which was now framed, while it preserved the essential features of the Confederacy,

A.D. — was a concession to the party of reform and progress. By the side of the old assembly, composed of deputies from the Cantons, was raised another, elected to be the representative of population apart from the consideration of States. A Council of seven, with a President at their head, became the executive power, and the seat of government was definitely fixed at Bern. The independence of the Cantons in local matters was retained; but the direction of all public works and the control of the army was transferred to the Federal authority; and a Federal flag was adopted in substitution for the many banners of the different Cantons.

1848 The year 1848, so memorable in many of the countries of Europe, passed tranquilly over the exhausted and now pacified Confederacy, and there is little left for history to record. The affairs of Neuchatel alone have since given cause for serious anxiety. It had entered the Confederation as a Canton in 1815; but it had retained its character as a principality under the sovereignty of the King of Prussia; and a momentary attempt, in the year of revolutions, was made to overthrow the royal authority. In later years the division between royalist and republican factions became marked. The position of the Canton was felt to be an anomaly; and even war appeared imminent in 1856. The King of Prussia, however, was persuaded in the
1857 following year to abandon his claims over a distant and unimportant portion of his dominions; and Neuchatel has since belonged with undivided allegiance to the Confederacy. There have been apprehensions later from the ambition and the growth of neighbour-

ing Powers. France, by the acquisition of Savoy A.D.
in 1859, appeared to threaten the Canton of Geneva 1859
with the fate of Strasburg or of Avignon. Italy, consolidating herself into a united monarchy, began to clamour for the annexation of the Canton of Ticino. But France has not had the disposition to attempt encroachments; and Italy has become reconciled to abandoning the hope of incorporating a population which has made no response to her overtures. In the domestic history of the Confederation a further revision of the Constitution in 1874 attracted notice. 1874
Again the party of centralization gained fresh concessions; and the supremacy of the central Government in military and ecclesiastical matters was decreed. Switzerland, like her greater neighbours, is consolidating her strength. She cannot compete with them in power, but she may still continue to deserve their respect.

THE END.

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